

The perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in facilitating social development

by

Adriaan Jordaan

**Thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Social Work in the
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the

University of Stellenbosch**

Supervisor: Prof LK Engelbrecht

December 2020

Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

December 2020

Copyright © 2020 Stellenbosch University

All rights reserved

Summary

Poverty is a rife socio-economic problem plaguing South Africa. As a point of departure, the study aimed to contextualise South African poverty against the global arena to elucidate the need for an increase in poverty alleviation initiatives. The study investigated the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education as a potential vehicle for poverty alleviation initiatives within South Africa's social welfare paradigm, as studies conducted in countries with similar socio-economic circumstances have shown that financial literacy education can be effective as a vehicle aimed at poverty alleviation and social development. There has been a lack of local studies that have investigated financial literacy education and as such, the study was undertaken to grow the knowledge basis associated with themes of financial literacy education.

The study was qualitative in nature and made use of semi-structured interviews with a main focus on open- and closed questions. Eighteen participants were utilised in the research process and the results indicated that financial literacy education was viewed as a powerful tool that could assist in poverty alleviation and social developmental initiatives. There was indicated that, in order for financial literacy education initiatives to be successful, multiple role-players would need to be involved in the process, and other challenges associated with poor socio-economic circumstances would need to be addressed in tandem with the stimulation of financial knowledge and skills. Finally, various recommendations are presented to social workers, social work organisations, and social work policy formulators based on the conclusions that were drawn.

Opsomming

Armoede is 'n ernstige probleem in Suid-Afrika. As vertrekpunt beoog hierdie studie om Suid-Afrikaanse armoede te kontekstualiseer ten opsigte van die res van die wêreld, om sodoende die behoefte aan armoedeverligtingsinisiatiewe te illustreer. Studies wat in lande met soortgelyke sosio-ekonomiese omstandighede as Suid-Afrika onderneem is, dui daarop dat finansiële geletterdheidsopvoedingsprogramme effektief kan dien as 'n wyse van armoede verligting en sosiale ontwikkeling. Hierdie studie is dus daarop gemik om maatskaplike werkers se persepsie oor finansiële geletterdheidsprogramme te ondersoek in terme van die Suid-Afrikaanse maatskaplike paradigma. Daar is 'n gebrek aan plaaslike studies wat finansiële geletterdheidsopvoeding ondersoek, en as sulks is hierdie studie onderneem om die kennisbasis geassosieer met die temas van finansiële geletterdheidsopvoeding te verbreed.

Die studie is kwalitatief van aard en het gebruik gemaak van 'n semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude, met 'n fokus op oop- en geslotevrae. Daar is gebruik gemaak van 18 deelnemers tydens die navorsingsproses, en die resultate het daarop gedui dat finansiële geletterdheidsopvoeding grootendeels as 'n waardevolle wyse ter ondersteuning van armoedeverligting en maatskaplike ontwikkelingsinisiatiewe beskou kan word. Daar is aangedui dat indien die finansiële geletterdheidsinisiatiewe sou slaag, verskeie rolspelers by die proses betrek moet word. Verder sou ander uitdagings wat met swak sosio-ekonomiese omstandighede geassosieer word, in tandem met die stimulasie van finansiële kennis en -vaardighede aangespreek moet word. Ten slotte word 'n verskeidenheid van aanbevelings vanuit die gevolgtrekkings gemaak en aangebied aan maatskaplikewerkers, maatskaplikewerk-organisasies en maatskaplikewerk-beleidsformuleerders.

In memory of my dear friend, Hannah Cornelius.

1996 – 2017

“To live in hearts we leave behind, is not to die” – Thomas Campbell

Recognitions and Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the persons and institutions listed below as, without them, I would not have been able to partake in, and complete this study as I did.

- To my immediate family: my mother Tania, my father Johan, and sister Karla. I thank you for all your love, effort and support, not only during this study, but every day for the last 27 years. Thank you for always going the extra mile and truly leading by example. I hope you will enjoy reading my thesis and that it makes you proud.
- To my better half, Megan. I thank you for being my rock. Your unending love, motivation and patience have helped me grow as a person and expand my worldview. I know you will say it is my hard work that has got me here (and it is) but may you never underestimate the impact you had (during this study's process) and have (everyday) on me.
- To the Department of Social Work at Stellenbosch University. Thank you for presenting me the opportunity to conduct my masters in such an esteemed setting, alongside the most wonderful staff. I will forever be grateful for what I learnt during my four years in your classes, and for how you have assisted me after.
- To my supervisor and mentor, Prof Engelbrecht. Thank you for believing in me and helping me to equip myself in working towards being a future thought-leader. You have truly gone above-and-beyond for me, and I consider myself very fortunate that I have had the opportunity to work under your guidance. Your dedication and passion for social work is inspiring and I hope to continue producing work that you would be proud to be associated with.
- To Mrs Rochelle Williams. Thank you for always having a kind word, or a joke to brighten up my day. I truly view you as the soul of the department and it makes my heart warm when I think of your smile. Thank you for all your assistance with the various administrative facets encompassing this document.
- To my friend, Bianca Bassi. Thank you for your patience, and perseverance in editing this document. I assure you the hours of frustration mean a great deal to me, and I think the completion of that task speaks greatly to your character.

- To my friends, Jos Nel, and Carmen Botes. Thank you for your invaluable assistance in translating and editing my abstract. Your graciousness to assist me, even though I asked you at the last minute, truly speaks to your character. I will forever be grateful for your assistance.
- To my cousin, Lindy Sinclair, and friends, Luke Smith, Elizabeth van Vuuren, Robynne Botha, and Janette Claasen. Thank you for taking initiative and time to assist me with obtaining participants in a time clouded by stress. Your initiative enabled me to retain momentum and helped in getting my study done. I will forever be thankful.
- To all the participants who accorded me their time, and allowed me to explore their perceptions, thank you very much. I appreciate all of you sincerely.

Table of contents

Declaration	ii
Summary	iii
Opsomming	iv
Recognitions and Acknowledgements	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction	
1.1 Rationale	1
1.2 Problem statement	3
1.3 Research questions	5
1.4 Goals and objectives	5
1.4.1.1 Objectives	5
1.5 Theoretical point of departure	5
1.6 Concepts and definitions	7
1.6.1 Financial capabilities	7
1.6.2 Financial literacy education	7
1.6.3 Capabilities approach	7
1.6.4 Social development	7
1.7 Research methodology	7
1.7.1 Research approach	7
1.7.2 Research design	8
1.7.3 Sample	9
1.7.4 Instrument for data collection	11
1.7.5 Data analysis	12
1.8 Ethical clearance	13
1.9 Limitations of the study	14

1.10 Presentation	14
-------------------	----

Chapter 2: Conceptualising poverty in a social developmental welfare paradigm

2.1 Introduction	16
2.2 What is poverty and why is it relevant?	16
2.3. Who experiences the effects of poverty?	18
2.4. The value of education	19
2.5. South African poverty vs the global arena	20
2.6. Legislative social welfare focuses	20
2.6.1. Critical exposition on the review of the White Paper for Social Welfare	22
2.6.2 The Bill of Rights	23
2.6.3 The National Development Plan	24
2.7 The dimensions of service provision	25
2.8. The role of the Department of Social Development	27
2.9. Poverty alleviation from a social developmental welfare approach	28
2.10. Poverty indicators by household expenditure	30
2.11. The capabilities approach and poverty alleviation	31
2.12 Conclusion	34

Chapter 3: Analysing and operationalising financial literacy education initiatives in a social developmental paradigm

3.1 Introduction	35
3.2 The capabilities approach	35
3.2.1. The capabilities approach's relevance to financial literacy education	37
3.2.2. Practical capabilities approach applications	38
3.2.3. The capabilities approach in South Africa: Who and how?	39
3.3. What is financial literacy education?	42
3.3.1 Financial literacy education and debt traps	44

3.3.2 Financial literacy education programs	46
3.3.3. Financial social work: Necessary skills	49
3.4. Social entrepreneurship as an operationalisation of financial education	51
3.4.1. The importance of social enterprise	53
3.4.2 Challenges facing social enterprise in South Africa	53
3.5 Conclusion	55
Chapter 4: Empirical study on the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in social development	
4.1 Introduction	57
Section A	
4.2 Research Methodology	58
4.2.1 Research Approach	58
4.2.2 Research Design	59
4.2.3 Sampling Methods	59
4.2.4 Data Collection	61
4.2.5 Data Analysis	62
Section B	
4.3 Participant Particulars	64
4.3.1 Individual profiles of participants	64
4.3.2 Length of time as a social worker	66
4.3.3 Type of organisation	67
4.3.4 Geographical area that they practice in	68
4.3.5 Amount of cases in caseload	69
Section C	
4.4 Themes, sub-themes and categories	70
4.4.1. Theme 1: Profile of service users' financial literacy	75

4.4.1.1. Main problems experienced by service users in caseload	76
4.4.1.1.1. Financial problems	76
4.4.1.1.2 Family disintegration	78
4.4.1.1.3. Mental health concerns	79
4.4.1.2. Definitions of poverty	80
4.4.1.2.1. Definition by Income level	80
4.4.1.2.2. Definition by the inability to provide for basic needs	81
4.4.1.2.3 Definition by mentality adopted	82
4.4.1.3 Reasons for service users' poverty	83
4.4.1.3.1. Structural and practical issues	83
4.4.1.3.2. Income issues	84
4.4.1.3.3. Issues of mentality	85
4.4.1.4. Reasons for service users' over-indebtedness	87
4.4.1.4.1. Financial reasons	87
4.4.1.4.2. Structural reasons	88
4.4.1.4.3. Reasons of mentality	89
4.4.1.5. Reasons for service users' illiteracy	90
4.4.1.5.1. Lack of appropriate education	90
4.4.1.5.2. Mentality adopted by service users	91
4.4.1.5.3. Structural reasons	93
4.4.1.6. Reasons to educate service users to be more financially literate	94
4.4.1.6.1. Interpersonal- and intrapersonal benefits.	94
4.4.1.6.2. Financial benefits	95
4.4.1.6.3. Cognitive benefits	96
4.4.1.7. Aspects that service users should be educated in	97
4.4.1.7.1. Financial aspects	97

4.4.1.7.2. Cognitive aspects	98
4.4.1.7.3 Practical aspects	99
4.4.2. Theme 2: The role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education	100
4.4.2.1. Intervention utilised when educating service users regarding financial literacy education	102
4.4.2.1.1. Generic social work intervention	102
4.4.2.1.2. Specialised interventions	103
4.4.2.1.3. Challenges to intervention	104
4.4.2.2. Pertinent role-players to be involved in the financial literacy education of service users	106
4.4.2.2.1. Social workers	106
4.4.2.2.2. Business community	107
4.4.2.2.3. Government	109
4.4.2.3 Key factors in the operationalisation of financial literacy endeavours	110
4.4.2.3.1. Social work as key factor	110
4.4.2.3.2. Schools as key factor	111
4.4.2.3.3. Practical considerations	112
4.4.2.4. Role of social workers regarding the financial literacy education of service users	113
4.4.2.4.1. Facilitator	113
4.4.2.4.2. Agent of empowerment	115
4.4.2.4.3. Enabler	116
4.4.2.5. Challenges regarding the financial literacy education of service users	117
4.4.2.5.1. Issues of mentality and behaviour	117

4.4.2.5.2. Logistical issues	118
4.4.2.6. Boons to aid in the facilitation of financial literacy education	119
4.4.2.6.1. Social worker skillset	119
4.4.2.6.2. Success stories as a motivating factor	121
4.4.2.7. Financial literacy education as contributor towards poverty alleviation and social development	122
4.4.2.7.1. Educational benefits	122
4.4.2.7.2 Cognitive benefits	124
4.4.2.7.3. Societal benefits	125
4.5. Conclusion	126
Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations	
5.1 Introduction	127
5.2 Conclusions and recommendations	128
5.2.1. Individual profile of participants	129
5.2.2. Theme 1: Profile of service users' financial literacy	130
5.2.2.1. Sub-theme 1: Main problems experienced by service users in caseload	130
5.2.2.2. Sub-theme 2: Definitions of poverty	131
5.2.2.3. Sub-theme 3: Reasons for service user poverty	132
5.2.2.4. Sub-theme 4: Reasons for service users' over-indebtedness	132
5.2.2.5. Sub-theme 5: Reasons for service users' financial illiteracy	133
5.2.2.6. Sub-theme 6: Reasons to educate services users to be more financially literate	134
5.2.2.7. Sub-theme 7: Pertinent aspects of service users' financial literacy education	135
5.2.3. Overarching conclusions regarding theme 1: Profile of service	

users' financial literacy	136
5.2.4. Overarching recommendations regarding theme 1: Profile of service users' financial literacy	137
5.2.4.1. Recommendations for social workers	137
5.2.4.2. Recommendations for social work organisations	137
5.2.4.3. Recommendations for policy regulators	138
5.2.5. Theme 2: The role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education	138
5.2.5.1. Sub-theme 1: Interventions utilised when educating service users regarding financial literacy education	139
5.2.5.2. Sub-theme 2: Pertinent role-players to be involved in financial literacy education	139
5.2.5.3. Sub-theme 3: Key factors in the operationalisation of financial literacy endeavours	141
5.2.5.4. Sub-theme 4: Role of social workers regarding financial literacy education	142
5.2.5.5. Sub-theme 5: Challenges regarding financial literacy education	143
5.2.5.6. Sub-theme 6: Boons to aid in the facilitation of financial literacy education	144
5.2.5.7. Sub-theme 7: Financial literacy education as contributor towards poverty alleviation and social development	145
5.2.6. Overarching conclusion regarding theme 2: The role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education	146
5.2.7. Recommendations regarding theme 2: The role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education	147
5.2.7.1. Recommendations for social workers	147

5.2.7.2. Recommendations for social work organisations	148
5.2.7.3. Recommendations for policy regulators	148
5.3. Key findings and recommendations for future research	149
Reference List	150

List of Figures

Figure 3.1. The Bermuda Debt Triangle	45
Figure 4.3.2. Length of time as a social worker	66
Figure 4.3.3. Type of organisation where participants work	67
Figure 4.3.4. Geographical area where services are rendered	68
Figure 4.3.5. Amount of cases in the caseloads of participants	69

List of Tables

Table 4.3.1. Individual profiles of participants	64
Table 4.4. Themes, sub-themes, and categories	71
Table 4.4.1. Theme 1: Profile of service users' financial literacy	74
Table 4.4.2. Theme 2: The role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education	100

List of Annexures

Annexure 1 – Interview schedule	168
Annexure 2 – Informed consent	171
Annexure 3 – Ethical clearance letter	174
Annexure 4 – Reflexivity report	176

Perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in facilitating social development

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Rationale

In South Africa, James Midgley is regarded as one of the primary authors in the field of social development. His theory (1995) explains that in order for sustainable growth to occur amongst service users it is imperative that attention be given to two salient aspects when working in social service settings. Social development rests on two distinctive tenets, one being human development and the other economic development. Midgley (1995) explains that the human development pillar is necessary to address problems that individuals face which impair their functioning on a personal level, while the economic pillar helps ensure a sense of self-sustainability in service users. Midgley (1995:25) particularly defines social development as: “a process of planned social change designed to promote the well-being of the population as a whole in conjunction with a dynamic process of economic development.”

The true value of social developmental theory lies in the “marriage” of the two tenets as explained by Gray (2006: S59). The author explains that, in a social developmental paradigm, welfare needs to be redefined as social development and since social development is dependent on both human, and economic factors, one cannot evaluate social development without evaluating economic policy (Gray, 2006). Economic policy can help aid the economic development of service users by providing a framework that will enable social workers to better address the economic needs of service users. By helping service users to work through personal- and economic challenges via facilitation and assistance, the opportunity is created to produce sustainable change. South Africa currently follows a social developmental paradigm as an overarching welfare approach (Republic of South Africa, 1997; 2016). Patel (2005) explains that the developmental approach to social welfare evolved from the country’s turbulent history regarding issues like inequality and the violation of human rights under the apartheid system. One of the main socio-economic problems that arose from the aforementioned regime is that of poverty.

Poverty is a multi-faceted concept and thus can be conceptualized in various ways. For the purposes of the study however, poverty will be conceptualized in two ways. As

a point of departure, in economic terms and then, from a capabilities' perspective. The general understanding of poverty is that of financial or monetary poverty. Konkel (2014) explains that the World Bank established a global poverty line of approximately R14 per day, which emphasized financial poverty as the single most important indicator of development. When viewing poverty from this perspective, several contributing factors need to be considered, the first being that of work and labour.

Statistics South Africa (2018) explain that there are various forms of work. For the purposes of this study however, the focus will be placed on employment and unemployment as the latter is a large contributor to poverty levels. As of the fourth quarter of 2018, South Africa's unemployment rate sits at 27.1%. According to the community survey of 2016, South Africa has a population of 55.6 Million people (Statistics South Africa, 2016) indicating the large need present in terms of unemployment. The issue with poverty, and especially such large-scale poverty, is that it is a multi-dimensional problem that can perpetuate itself as it stems from various factors and also causes various other socio-economic problems (e.g. crime). It is therefore imperative to make attempts to not only understand the complexities of poverty, but also to work towards finding solutions to it. If one can reduce poverty, it will also reflect in areas such as reduced crime statistics and an increased general standard of living. Therefore, this study will now introduce the concept of financial literacy education as a potential buffer against poverty.

Various forms of literacy exist, financial literacy being one example, amongst others. Financial literacy at its core entails people's ability to work with money (Engelbrecht, 2008b; Jumpstart Coalition, 2007). Thus, it regards facets of life such as forming spending habits and producing certain patterns of financial behaviour. When considering this insight, financial literacy education would entail facilitating service users' responsible financial behaviour through the ability and confidence to effectively apply knowledge related to personal finance (Huston, 2010). Financial capability is a broader term than financial literacy education in that it encapsulates financial literacy education but also regards aspects such as opportunities to access the formal economy (Sherraden, 2017). Although this research will primarily focus on financial literacy education, (and consequently, have a bottom-up approach) it is important to draw the distinction between it and financial capability as they are often discussed as one entity.

Financial capability studies have been done by Banerjee (2016) and Kagotho, Ssewamala, Patak-Pietrafesa and Byansi (2018) in India and Kenya, respectively. The Indian studies showed that 97% of the participants in the study managed to save money to meet their daily needs, while the Kenyan studies reported that approximately 58% of the sample made advanced plans to use and save their money. Saving is a money-management technique that is taught under financial literacy education (Kagotho *et al*, 2018). Therefore, these studies elucidate the potential positive impact that financial literacy education can have on issues of poverty and thus shows the importance for the research to be done in the South African context. By saving, one can better plan and manage one's financial life, which in turn can lead to a higher standard of living and perceived personal well-being in having the freedom to live a more valued life. This directly ties into the capabilities approach of Sen (1979), which will be used as an underlying theoretical framework for the study, and act as a second lens through which to conceptualize poverty.

Amartya Sen is a renowned economist and philosopher who is regarded as one of the primary authors on the capabilities approach. Terzi (2010) explains that the capabilities approach is fundamentally innovative due to its perspective that quality of life should be measured by people's capabilities to function, and their ability to be and do what they value being or doing. Jacobson (2016) therefore argues that the capabilities approach offers a revolutionary perspective on human development by expanding the variables regarded as important in it. There was decided upon the capabilities approach as a key theoretical underpinning for this research as it links with financial literacy education in the sense that, if poverty is lessened via the implementation of financial literacy education initiatives, the service users will have greater capabilities and opportunities to be and do what they value (Engelbrecht, 2008b, 2008c, 2009; Sherraden, 2018) ultimately leading to an improved way of life.

1.2. Problem statement

Large scale poverty is detrimental to societies as it creates a vast amount of other socio-economic problems. When practicing within a social developmental framework, it is imperative that attention be given to both tenets (social and economic) of social developmental theory to ensure the largest possible potential positive impact (Gray, 2006). In South Africa however, this is not the case. A study done by Engelbrecht (2008a) elucidates that certain South African social workers view the economic pillar

of social development as mere job creation and as the responsibility of other role-players in social development and not their own. This is problematic as, if the service users are in tough financial situations it directly impacts their quality of life (Kasser, Rosenblum, Sameroff, Deci, Niemiec, Ryan, Arnodottir, Bond, Dittmar, & Dungan, 2014; West, 2003; Zaleskiewicz, Gasiorowska, & Kesebir, 2013). If service users are experiencing a low quality of life, it can negatively impact their ability and opportunity to live in a manner that they deem valuable. Furthermore, even though studies in an Indian-, Kenyan-, and North-American context (Banerjee, 2016; Kagotho *et al*, 2018, Sherraden, 2018) have shown that implementing financial literacy education has had a positive correlation to people saving money, i.e. more responsible economic behaviour, there has been a lack of local studies investigating the topic.

Engelbrecht (2008, 2009, 2011) is the only scholar to have studied financial capabilities and financial literacy education in South Africa within a social developmental paradigm and specifically within the social work discipline. This points to the fact that the topic is under researched and that there is a lack of recent research regarding the topic, although much has been done in other disciplines (Fox, Bartholomae & Trombitas, 2012; Garcia, 2011; Gutter & Renner, 2007; Parker, 2010; Schuchardt, Hanna, Hira, Lyons, Palmer & Xiao, 2009; Winter, Luhrmann & Serra Garcia, 2013). South Africa currently has approximately 15 million unemployed people (Statistics South Africa, 2018), which heightens the effects of poverty and the other socio-economic problems that come with it. It is imperative that research regarding the role of financial literacy education in social development be conducted to try and identify ways in which it can be used as a tool to support poverty alleviation efforts and social development expansion.

A study conducted by Engelbrecht (2009) showed that there is a correlation between financial- and human well-being. The research explains that financial hardship can be an overwhelmingly stressful experience for service users which can negatively impact their inter- and intrapersonal relationships (Foyer, 2000; Nash, Jenkinson, Vayro & Sandlat 2005). According to the Framework for Social Welfare Services in the Integrated Service Delivery Model (Republic of South Africa, 2013) social service delivery in South Africa should reflect an integration of human-, social-, and economic capital development to enhance service users' human-, social-, and economic functioning. Therefore, it would be necessary, after more than a decade of

Engelbrecht's (2009) study, to revisit the perceptions of social workers to reassess their current mindset regarding the role of financial literacy education in the facilitation of social development.

1.3. Research question: What are the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in social development?

1.4. Goals and objectives

The following section will provide information related to the determined goal and objectives of the study to assist in understanding what the study aims to achieve.

1.4.1 Goal: The goal of the research was to develop an understanding of the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in facilitating social development.

1.4.1.1. Objectives:

- 1.)** To conceptualise and contextualise poverty, vulnerable people, and social work within a social developmental paradigm in South Africa, based on a capabilities approach towards poverty alleviation.
- 2.)** To analyse the facilitation of financial literacy education initiatives in South African social work contexts, with an especial focus on financial literacy education as a measure towards poverty alleviation.
- 3.)** To empirically investigate the perceptions of social workers regarding the role of financial literacy education in social development.
- 4)** To draw conclusions and present recommendations to frontline social workers, managers of social workers, social work organizations and policy regulators regarding the value of financial literacy initiatives as a tool in developmental social work services, aimed at poverty alleviation.

1.5. Theoretical point of departure

The work of Midgley (1995) was used as the primary point of departure in terms of social developmental theory in this study. His work was consulted to explore the core of the theme, which in the case of this study, attributed special attention to the facet of economic development. The researcher utilised Midgley's work to establish a framework for comparison to the current state of the social developmental paradigm

present in South Africa by identifying ways in which the theory and practice aligned or clashed. The work of Midgley and Conley (2010) was furthermore used to inform the researcher regarding the necessary context for social developmental practice as this helped to contextualise the social workers' perceptions within a practice framework. In doing so, insight was obtained regarding how questions to the social workers could be practically phrased. This helped to ensure that the questions to participants in this study were not ambiguous, which allowed for in-depth exploration of the workers' perceptions.

Regarding the philosophical framework of the study, the work of Sen (1979), in the form of the capabilities approach, was used as the theoretical frame of reference, with the main focus being on the three aspects of functioning, capabilities and agency. Begon (2017) explains that functioning can be regarded as decisions made by individuals that give their life value, with capabilities being defined as the opportunity to conduct the aforementioned functioning. Terzi (2010) explains agency as an individual's reflections and actions in shaping their life goals. When considering the definitions of the aspects presented above, it is apparent that the capabilities approach is concerned with a human-centred perspective. Therefore, the researcher attempted to actively apply a capabilities approach to all facets of the study. However, he found that it led to especially value in the empirical study, where its application was used to evoke potential different perspectives from the social workers. In doing so, the researcher was aided in exploring issues relating to social development from a more human-centred perspective, as opposed to the economic one stemming from the theme of financial literacy education. This allowed the culmination of perspectives, in the form of a synthesis between a human-centred and economic-focused perspectives (Gray, 2006), to be achieved.

Literature from Sherraden (2010) and Sherraden (2017, 2018) was consulted regarding the topic of financial capabilities and financial literacy education as they have been at the forefront of studying the topic and therefore were able to provide the researcher with in-depth insight into it. By drawing from the aforementioned authors' work, the researcher hoped to develop a perspective that adhered to the core tenets of financial literacy education, while being localized in the South African context. To aid in the achievement of context localization, the work of Engelbrecht (2008, 2009,

2011) and Engelbrecht and Ornellas (2019) were consulted to help “marry” international social development ideas with the South African context.

1.6. Concepts and definitions

The following section will provide definitions of concepts that are key to the study, and as such, are integral to understand.

1.6.1 Financial capabilities: The ability to act in one’s best economic interests, actions that, in turn, bolster the economic well-being of the actors (Sherraden, Birkenmaier, Sherraden, & Curley, 2013). The concept includes financial literacy but also addresses institutional barriers to opportunity (Sherraden, 2010).

1.6.2. Financial literacy education: The ability and confidence to effectively apply knowledge related to personal finance (Huston, 2010). It also includes the ability to manage financial resources effectively for financial security (Jumpstart Coalition, 2007).

1.6.3. Capabilities approach: The theoretical perspective that stipulates that human well-being is measured in terms of being able to be what one wants to be, and being able to do what one wants to do, i.e. to have the opportunity to live one’s life in a way that brings meaning to it, in one’s own way (Sen, 1979; Terzi, 2010).

1.6.4. Social development: An approach that stipulates that sustainable development stems from the marriage of two unique tenets – human development and economic development. It argues that sustainability is best attained when both tenets are given equal attention, that is, to help people work through their personal problems while helping them to become economically self-sufficient (Midgley, 1995).

1.7. Research methodology

The section that follows will discuss various aspects that pertain to the research methodology that was adopted, including aspects such as the research approach, the research design, the sample, the instrument for data collection, and data analysis. Although the research methodology is being discussed in this introductory chapter, it will also be discussed at the start of the empirical chapter in a more reflective way.

1.7.1. Research approach

Since the study is concerned with perspectives, i.e. mindsets and worldviews of social work practitioners, a qualitative research approach was utilised. Authors such as

Milena, Dainora and Alin (2008), Morehouse (2012) and Guest, Namey and Mitchell (2013) explain that qualitative research is useful in exploring the question of “why” making it an appropriate research approach to the study as the researcher wanted to understand the nature of the social workers’ perceptions. Due to the fact that the research aimed to attain insight into the workers’ perceptions the study was exploratory in nature. The insight obtained was utilised to draw parallels between the current state of social development within the South African context with the perceived positives observed in studies done abroad. The insight was further utilised to describe the manner in which the South African context was unique, which helped to contextualise the challenges and possible solutions in a local sphere, providing the study with a descriptive nature. The study utilised a deductive approach, rather than an inductive approach, to help link the theoretical basis with the observed phenomena as a means of comparison between the two arenas. A greater sense of depth was attained via a deductive approach as it tends to encapsulate slower, more deliberate analytic processes (Heit & Rotello, 2010). Hence, the empirical study followed on a thorough literature study.

1.7.2. Research design

The study utilised exploratory and descriptive research design methods. Blaikie (2000) explains that an exploratory research design allows the researcher to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or individual and, since the aim of the research is to attain insight into the perceptions of social workers, this design is appropriate.

Authors De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, and Delport (2011), Scott and Garner (2013) and Ravitch and Carl (2016) explain that a descriptive research design should be utilised when one wants to formulate a picture regarding specific details of a situation by focusing on “how” and “why” questions. By focusing on “how” and “why” questions, the researcher was able to obtain a further sense of depth into the topic. In practical terms, this focus was applied by constructing the interview questions in a manner that provided the participants with the opportunity to interpret and answer the questions in a way that resonated with their own perceptions and experiences. This provided a platform for them to answer honestly, without the fear of being judged, tying in with certain ethical considerations (which is discussed under section 1.8 of this chapter).

Finally, the explorative and descriptive designs were utilised to draw comparisons between the theoretical basis and the phenomena perceived in practice. In doing so, the researcher was able to identify ways in which the South African context differs from the context of the studies conducted abroad, which provided insight into how the perceptions of the South African social workers helped shape the social development service delivery sphere.

1.7.3. Sample

The sample for the study was 18 social workers practicing at social service organisations that deal directly with service users experiencing financial poverty. Given (2008) explains that saturation is the point in data collection where no new information emerges. She explains that some researchers consider a sample size of 15-20 participants in qualitative research as appropriate for saturation of themes in analysis. The researcher established saturation by treating each individual response as equal to the other and by analysing their discourses to try and establish recurring themes. When the researcher saw that the various responses started to fit into the established thematic frameworks without presenting new information that would necessitate the creation of a new theme, he knew that saturation has been achieved. This was evident after the interview with the eighteenth participant.

The criteria for inclusion to this study were:

- social workers who are registered with the South African Council for Social Service Professions;
- social workers who had more than one year of frontline experience (as they needed to be able to reflect on their work and experience);
- the workers needed to work directly towards poverty eradication with the services that they render;
- they needed to be practicing a generalist form of social work;
- they needed to be willing to conduct the interviews in their own personal capacity;
- they worked either in the public- or private sector (as the focus of the interviews regarded their perceptions and did not focus on their organizational environment or the views of their respective organisations)

Criteria for exclusion included social workers that:

- practiced in more specialised areas (for e.g. a drug rehabilitation centre);
- or in areas that do not pertain to poverty eradication;
- as well as workers who were unwilling or unable to commit to the interviews from their own personal capacity (to avoid the interviewees acting as representatives of the organisations where they work).

The study made use of a snowball sampling method. Thompson (2002), Bloor and Wood (2006) and Scott and Garner (2013) explain that one way to approach snowball sampling is to identify members of a population and then to ask those members to identify other members of the same population. The researcher aimed to follow these guidelines in searching for his participants. In a practical form, he followed the guidelines by calling, e-mailing, or making appointments with social workers at various social service organisations in order to establish a basis of social workers that were willing to participate. He also explained to the participants that he is using snowball sampling and what that entails. He applied the snowball sampling method by asking the participants whether they could refer any other social workers that might be interested in conducting interviews, and who met the criteria for inclusion. If they could, he contacted those social workers and repeated the process. If the initial respondent(s) failed to link him with other social workers, he reverted to calling, e-mailing and/or making appointments for video interviews as the process deemed necessary.

The researcher was aware that there could be ethical implications if the process was not executed correctly, which is why he gave a detailed explanation of what the research and the interview entailed before the arrangement of a formal interview. He provided the participants with an informed consent form, explained confidentiality and that they (the participants) may opt out of the process at any time without repercussions. Furthermore, the researcher would not intrude on the social workers' work environments as the participants were interviewed in their personal, professional capacity at a time and place of their choice, outside their work environment. See section 1.8 for more information on ethical considerations.

1.7.4. Data collection methods

The researcher made use of a semi-structured interview method with a main use of open questions. Given (2008) explains that open questions are useful when one wants to attain more in-depth answers on a question, as the participants can decide how they orient towards the question posed. It is to be noted that the researcher adapted his interview style to fit the context of each individual participant, as necessary.

The interview settings were decided upon in tandem with the interviewees and thus differed from one respondent to the next. However, owing to the global Covid-19 pandemic that arose during the start of 2020, a national lockdown was declared in South Africa. The lockdown, alongside the decision to try and decrease interpersonal contact, resulted in the researcher deciding to conduct the interviews via the video calling platform, Zoom. The researcher initially planned to utilise telephonic interviews, but since telephonic interviews will result in a lack of visual cues for the researcher to build and maintain rapport (Farooq & De Villiers, 2017), he decided to rather utilise the video calling platform, Zoom. All participants were asked whether they were comfortable using Zoom, or whether they would want to utilise other platforms such as WhatsApp. All eighteen participants indicated that they were comfortable using Zoom. Studies conducted by Deakin and Wakefield (2014) found that researchers who utilised the video-calling platform, Skype, faced no difficulty building and maintaining rapport, in comparison with face-to-face interviews. Therefore, when considering that Zoom is similar to Skype in nature, the appropriateness of the selection of Zoom as the interview medium, is further elucidated.

Broad themes that the researcher focused on included facets of biographical information (such as how long participants had been practicing, the type of organisation that they worked for, the geographical area in which they render services, and the amount of cases in their caseloads)) as well as themes pertaining to financial literacy education. Themes pertaining to financial literacy education regarded aspects such as the profile of participants' service users' financial literacy, and the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education. In expanding the themes presented above, various sub-themes were identified. They will be presented and discussed fully in the empirical chapter, chapter four. See chapter four for more details on the aforementioned themes and sub-themes. The same questions were asked to all participants to attain insight into the varying nuances of the differing perspectives of

the social workers in order to provide depth. Permission was obtained from the participants to record the interviews on Zoom, which aided the researcher with the transcription and subsequent analysis of interviews.

1.7.5. Data analysis

The researcher transcribed the interview recordings in order to be able to perform analysis via thematic content analysis. The process of thematic content analysis was implemented manually by the researcher and included a process of six phases of coding as described by Braun and Clarke (2006). This process entailed the familiarization with collected data, generating initial codes, searching for themes among codes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and producing the final report. Throughout the analysing process, the researcher paid special attention to aspects of coding to ensure the effective comparison between already existing codes and the identification of new codes could be drawn (Leech, & Onwuegbuzie, 2007).

Member checking was also implemented to ensure that the researcher understood the participants correctly during the interview process. Member checking entails the researcher rephrasing the words of the participant to ascertain whether the researcher understood the core of what the participant said (Carlson, 2010; Curtin & Fossey, 2007; Merriam, 1998).

Data credibility was maintained during the data analysis process by giving pertinent focus to aspects such as transferability and authenticity. **Transferability** is achieved if findings can be applied to other settings (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013; Polit & Beck, 2012). Cope (2014) explains that transferability has been achieved if the reader of the study can associate their own experiences with the results of the study. Since the researcher interviewed multiple social workers, he aimed to determine lines of tendency when considering the data as a whole as this would help increase the transferability of the research. **Authenticity** refers to the extent that the researcher is able to adequately capture and express participants' responses (Cope, 2014). The researcher attained a greater sense of authenticity by asking questions during the interviews in order to ensure that he understood the core of what the participants were saying. He would then rephrase their statements and present them back to the participants. This was done to check whether the crux of the information provided correlates with what the participants meant via their responses. **Reflexivity** can be

viewed as the intentional self-awareness of the researcher-participant relationship on the research process (Oliphant, & Bennet, 2020) and as such, is an important aspect of consideration. In order to maintain awareness around aspects of reflexivity, the researcher engaged in reflexive journaling as a means of staying aware of his own biases and their potential influence on the research process. In doing so, the application of reflexive journaling allowed the researcher to be more attuned to the opportunities and challenges of the reflexivity process (Oliphant, & Bennet, 2020; Berger, 2015; Probst, & Berenson, 2014; Markham, 2009). See annexure four for a complete reflexivity report.

1.8. Ethical clearance

The researcher submitted his proposal electronically to the Departmental Ethics Screening Committee (DESC). The DESC decided on the level of risk and, upon approval, the proposal was submitted to the Research Ethics Committee of Stellenbosch University (REC), under the project number 13086. Please see annexure three for the ethical clearance letter, attached at the end of the document for more details, as necessary. Since the study is concerned with the perceptions of practitioners and is not focused on intense personal experiences the research is considered low risk in terms of ethical considerations. The researcher explained the process of the research to the participants and answered any questions that arose. He made use of an informed consent form (see annexure two, attached at the end of the document), which he discussed with each participant before getting them to sign it, providing him with permission to interview them. He explained that their responses would be confidential and only available to him and his supervisor. The researcher covered the concept of anonymity by explaining that none of the responses would be able to be traced back to the participants themselves. The data was kept on a password-protected computer and backed up onto his private cloud storage system that ensures that only the researcher has access to the data. The recordings were deleted once they were transcribed and the transcriptions were kept safe in the same manner described above. Therefore, unauthorized access to the data would not be possible. No debriefing was conducted with the participants as the study focused on their' perceptions.

1.9. Limitations of the study

According to Schurink, Fouche, and De Vos (2011) limitations are salient aspects that the researcher needs to be aware of, recognize, acknowledge, and present clearly. The first limitation to this study regarded the fact that there is a gap in research relating to the South Africa context of financial literacy, which made it difficult at times to adequately conceptualise where the true need of the investigation lay. There are few scholars that have investigated the topic, and of the ones that did, much time has passed since the studies were conducted. A second limitation regards the issue of generalization. Since the study's sample only comprised of eighteen participants, the findings were not able to be generalized as the sample was too small. However, being as the study is qualitative and not quantitative in nature, generalization was not the primary goal. The goal was to attain insight, which in turn, could be used to inform, and provide direction for future studies on this topic. Another limitation to the study regarded the researcher's challenge of finding appropriate participants. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many social workers who the researcher contacted were either unable to participate due to increased demand of social services or were unreachable when the researcher attempted correspondence. The researcher attempted to circumnavigate the aforementioned challenges by tapping into his personal network of service providers as a means of departure (related to finding participants), and by approaching participants who were successfully interviewed whether they could link the researcher with more willing participants.

1.10. Presentation

The research study comprises of five chapters. The first chapter encapsulated information pertaining aspects such as the motivation for the study, the problem statement, and aims and objectives. It also presented information regarding the research methodology that was utilized in the study. Chapter two is the first of two literature review chapters. It contextualises poverty in a South African context by considering various aspects that impact upon it. Chapter three discusses the capabilities approach as a main underlying theoretical framework to the study, while paying special attention to the aspect of financial literacy education and its potential operationalisation via the vehicle of social entrepreneurship and -enterprise. Chapter four regards the empirical study, and as such, entails information regarding data

collection and analysis. Chapter five engrosses conclusions drawn from the analysis, and respective recommendations provided.

Chapter 2: Conceptualising poverty in a social developmental welfare paradigm

2.1. Introduction

This chapter will focus on the conceptualisation and contextualization of the variables of poverty, vulnerable people, social work and efforts of poverty alleviation within a South African social developmental paradigm. In order to achieve the aforementioned, several themes will be explored. As a point of departure, the chapter will focus on what poverty is and what its effects are. The researcher will consider the role and value of education, especially in terms of financial literacy education, in regard to poverty's volatile nature as a potential antecedent against it. To ensure the localization of poverty in South Africa, the study will compare the situation in South Africa with the state of poverty on an international scale.

To aid in this endeavour, the research will consider various legislative documents that help inform the unique South African social service delivery context such as the White Paper of Social Welfare, the Bill of Rights and the National Developmental Plan. There will be looked at what the role and dimensions of social service provision are in South Africa, before considering whether the vehicle of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise can be utilized in an effort to help operationalize initiatives of poverty alleviation.

This chapter will lay the groundwork for the context necessary in order to understand the following chapter that pertains to the facilitation of financial literacy education as a capabilities approach towards poverty alleviation from a social developmental welfare approach.

2.2. What is poverty and why is it relevant?

The most common understanding of poverty is that of financial disequilibrium or monetary disparity. Monetary disparity encapsulates various potential concerns to individuals as not having money can affect various spheres of an individual's life. This understanding can be generally attributed to the Human Developmental Index (HDI) that was developed by the United Nations Development Program (United Nations, 2010). Steinert, Cluver, Melendez-Torres and Vollmer (2018) argue that The HDI has been critical in the understanding of poverty as it is a composite index, meaning it

considers a multitude of factors in its conceptualisation. Alongside the HDI, the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) (Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, 2010), developed by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative also provides insight into the conceptualization of poverty. The MPI assesses individual deprivation by considering a list of ten indicators that include aspects such as nutrition, schooling, mortality and living standards (Steinert *et al*, 2018). Despite the aforementioned indices' widespread use, Hartgenn, Klasen and Vollmer (2013) have questioned their appropriateness when used over time and across space. Authors Chakraborty, Fry, Behl and Longfield (2016) and Doudich, Ezrari, Van der Weide and Verme (2015) argue that a main concern is the use of "one-size-fits-all" definitions of poverty across urban- and rural contexts. This is important as poverty in different geographical settings often have different contexts, and in South Africa's case, this stems from factors such as the Apartheid regime that forced migrants to leave their rural dwellings behind in search of financial gain in urban areas. This can be seen in how disparities in urban- and rural areas mirror former spatial policies of the Apartheid regime (Daniels, Partridge, Kekana & Musundwa, 2013). Since it is crucial to contextualise poverty to a South African context for the purposes of the study, there will now be looked at the current situation regarding poverty in South Africa.

According to the most recent data available, South Africa's population is approximately 58 million (Statistics SA, 2019). The latest living conditions survey conducted by Statistics South Africa (2015), showed that nearly 50% of the adult population lived in poverty. That equates to around 29 million people. Unemployment in the first quarter of 2019 rose to 27.6% with the number of unemployed persons rising by 62 000 to a total of 6.2 million and employment falling by 237 000 for a total of 16.29 million employed persons. Furthermore, the economy also slumped sharply in the first quarter of 2019 as it contracted by 3.2% (Statistics SA, 2018). It is clear to see that the economy is struggling and unemployment is rising which means that more people will have to deal with facing the effects of poverty such as financial hardship and increased stress due to said hardship, negatively impacting on their quality of life and potentially leading to the perpetuation of other socio-economic issues.

2.3. Who experiences the effects of poverty?

The effects of poverty are the most intensely felt by people who are deemed to be vulnerable. Section 175 of the White Paper of Social Welfare (Republic of South Africa, 1997) describes what circumstances are deemed necessary for a person to be regarded as a vulnerable person. For the purposes of this study, the researcher will place focus on people regarded as financially vulnerable. Section 27(a) of the White Paper of Social Welfare states that people are especially financially vulnerable during times of unemployment, and phenomena such as social-, political- and economic hardships (Republic of South Africa, 1997). By regarding the definition provided by the White Paper as true, it reveals a shocking fact – 6.2 million people in South Africa are constantly regarded as financially vulnerable due to them being unemployed, while 22.8 million people are constantly regarded as financially vulnerable because they live in poverty. Section 27(b) of the White Paper explains that poverty coincides with racial, gender and geographic or spatial determinants (Republic of South Africa, 1997) which makes sense as South Africa's apartheid history enforced a racialized divide of all aspects of living, including employment and access to employment opportunities. Therefore, black African people are the demographic still mostly affected by poverty.

Since the country's democratization in 1994, there has also been little change in the number of black Africans that are regarded as skilled workers as 15% were skilled in 1994 and only 18% were skilled twenty years later in 2014 (Statistics South Africa, 2014). Being skilled is an important determinant in obtaining better opportunities for accruing economic wealth as it opens opportunities within the job market that are closed to semi- or unskilled workers. This also highlights the importance of education in the war against poverty, making the case for financial literacy education even stronger. Even if the formal education system continues to struggle via cutting spending and pupils and students being unable to afford tuition (Statistics South Africa, 2018), financial literacy education initiatives can help people in poverty to manage the little resources that they have in a smarter manner. Engelbrecht (2011) argued that South Africans' financial vulnerability has risen since 2001 with the key reasons being issues such as over-indebtedness and bad financial planning that results in them spending more than they earn, further highlighting the importance of financial education initiatives as a means to combat poverty and progress towards financial freedom.

2.4. The value of education

Financial literacy education is a crucial factor in the war against poverty. Spaull (2015) defines quality education as the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values that society deems valuable. In the case of financial literacy education, Engelbrecht (2008b) provides insight regarding what financial knowledge, skills and values entails. He explains that these concepts all align under the umbrella of financial literacy education and all contribute to the increased financial well-being and improved financial decision making, -planning and -management of individuals. Financial literacy education, he explains, comprises of several variables that overlap with a multitude of dimensions. This aligns with Haushofer and Fehr's exposition (2014) where they explain that poverty is characterized not only by insufficient income but a multitude of factors such as dysfunctional institutions, exposure to violence and crime and aspects such as poor access to health care.

At its basis, financial literacy education entails aspects that align with consumer education, such as basic economic education, knowledge of rights and responsibilities of the consumer and a proactive, rather than a reactive money management style (Engelbrecht & Ornellas, 2019). For the purposes of this exposition, the researcher will focus on what the dimension of education entails relating to the aspects expressed above to elucidate the relationship between finances, and more specifically, financial literacy education with the aforementioned aspects of poverty.

It is to be noted that the aspects listed above overlap and are interwoven as part of the phenomenon that is financial literacy. The Jumpstart Coalition (2007) explained more than a decade ago that financial literacy is the ability to use knowledge and skills to manage financial resources effectively for lifetime financial security. In order to be able to do this, people need basic economic education. Basic economic education in its simplest form, refers to people's ability to work with money (Engelbrecht & Ornellas, 2019). This ability regards aspects such as adequate dealings with financial institutions as well as understanding personal finance on a level that enables individuals to take responsibility for their own personal finance matters.

Adequate dealings with financial institutions entail individuals taking responsibility for their own financial well-being by utilizing financial institutions as a medium to generate savings over time. For this to happen, individuals need knowledge of how banking

institutions operate as well as how financial aspects such as interest works. Interestingly, studies conducted by Engelbrecht (2008, 2009) in South Africa found that a large majority of individuals living in poverty were either partially banked, or non-banked. This points to a lack of financial literacy education regarding the value of utilizing financial institutions as a medium to grow personal capital.

Theodora and Marti'ah (2016) explain that consumers with a low level of financial literacy have a tendency to purchase goods they want, instead of what they need. Furthermore, they also remark that financial habits (both positive and negative) that form during the transition to adulthood are likely to persist throughout adulthood (Theodora & Marti'ah, 2016). This is problematic as, if individuals are living in poverty, uneducated spending patterns mean that they will not be able to improve their economic standing which causes them to fall into a self-sustaining cycle of poverty. In order to localize the context of poverty, it is imperative that the South African context be juxtaposed against the global arena.

2.5. South African poverty vs the global arena

To consider and contextualise the situation in South Africa against the global arena, some comparative statistics are necessary. According to Klapper, Lusardi, and van Oudheusden (2014) the poor and less educated participants are more likely to suffer from gaps in financial knowledge. They further continue by stating that the global financial literacy survey conducted in 2014 showed that this is not only true in developing economies but also in countries with well-developed financial markets (Klapper, Lusardi & van Oudheusden, 2015). According to Klapper, Lusardi and van Oudheusden (2015) on a global scale, 57 percent of adults save money, but just 27 percent use a bank or other formal financial institution to do so. This means the other 30 percent utilize less lucrative methods, such as informal savings groups or stuffing cash under a mattress. These methods are clearly financially unsound and are hazardous practices as it places the participants at a higher risk of monetary disparity should something happen to their savings stored in a place other than the bank. This is a double-edged sword of sorts, as the phenomena described above is usually found in financially illiterate individuals who are either living in poverty or facing financial hardships. Therefore, if something should happen to their savings it could plummet them further into poverty, resulting in a self-perpetuating cycle of financial hardship, that stems from financial illiterate behaviour.

Studies conducted by Engelbrecht (2008; 2009), as alluded to above, showed that a large majority of people living in poverty in South Africa are partially banked or unbanked. This means that the aforementioned people only save a small portion of their money in a bank, or do not use banking systems at all which correlates with the findings of the global financial literacy survey. According to the international data-monitoring and survey company, Quartz, South Africa is ranked #41 in the international financial literacy arena as of 2016 above both countries of India and Kenya (Quartz Africa, 2016). These countries are of special interest as they are both developing countries and therefore similar to South Africa in a developmental economic regard. Financial literacy education studies conducted in India and Kenya respectively by Banerjee (2016) and Kagotho, Ssewamala, Patak-Pietrafesa and Byansi (2018) revealed the positive potential of the adequate implementation of financial literacy initiatives. The Indian studies showed that 97% of the participants in the study managed to save money to meet their daily needs, while the Kenyan studies reported that approximately 58% of the sample made advanced plans to use and save their money. Therefore, if countries similar in their developmental economic state to South Africa, and who ranked below South Africa in terms of financial literacy education, can yield positive results from financial education initiatives, the possibility exists that it can yield the same, if not better results as South Africa's base percentage level of financial literacy is higher than both the aforementioned countries. In order to achieve adequate levels of implementation of financial education initiatives however, various role-players such as public- and private sector service providers will need to work together in a manner that is focused around a social developmental paradigm, that reflects the prioritization of legislative social welfare focuses and their application.

2.6. Legislative social welfare focuses

Due to South Africa's turbulent history with regards to segregation it left the country skewed in terms of equal opportunity, access to services, and development. Therefore, after the first democratic election took place and the government was reshuffled, a pertinent focus was placed on social development as a paradigm with regards to social service delivery to try and equalize the balance of opportunity, access to services and development. This focus is mandated by legislative documents such as the White Paper for Social Welfare (Republic of South Africa, 1997), the Bill of

Rights (Republic of South Africa, 1995) and the National Development Plan (Republic of South Africa, 2012).

The White Paper of Social Welfare was drafted in 1997 and provided guidelines regarding the focus that social delivery services had to take. It states that facets such as unequal opportunity, -employment and -levels of education were pertinent focus areas as poverty cannot be measured by income alone (Republic of South Africa, 1997). It also stated that the lack of the factors mentioned above resulted in many people being deprived of their dignity and the ability to look after themselves, which negatively impacts upon their capabilities to live a valued life. Between 2013 and 2016, a review of the White Paper for Social Welfare (Republic of South Africa, 2016) was conducted to identify in which ways the White Paper had succeeded and in which ways its implementation could be improved.

2.6.1. Critical exposition on the review of the White Paper for Social Welfare

The summary report of the review of the White Paper, which was compiled between 2013 and 2016 stated that the social developmental approach was integral as a medium that sought to situate individual's pain and trauma within South Africa's unique socio-political context of institutional racism and structural inequalities (Republic of South Africa, 2016). The paper found however, that a great deal of confusion still exists regarding what exactly a social developmental approach to social welfare means, as there were found to be many diverse understandings of the concept in various spheres of service delivery, ranging from the governmental sector, the non-governmental sector, private practitioners of social developmental professions, academics and researchers (Republic of South Africa, 2016). The implications of this is that the vast difference in understanding can create disequilibrium between the various role-players in South Africa's social developmental setting. It is pertinent that all role-players be on the same page regarding what social development as a paradigm for service delivery means to ensure that all social service providers have a clear direction regarding what the vision, mission, and goals are. If unison exists in this manner it can aid the individuals who the social developmental paradigm is aimed at by ensuring that all service providers render services that are in line with mandated legislation. This, in turn, will help the social developmental initiatives to progress at a faster pace, which means that issues such as structural inequalities and poverty will be able to be addressed more efficiently and effectively. A key piece of legislation that can aid in the

unification of understanding regarding what a social developmental approach to social welfare means is the Bill of Rights.

2.6.2. The Bill of Rights

The Bill of Rights is enshrined in chapter two of the South African Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1995). In keeping with the social developmental approach that is aimed at balancing skewed structural systems, the Bill of Rights serves as the cornerstone of the South African democracy. It also serves as one of the most important governing bodies of legislature, not only for civilians, but also for service deliverers. This can be seen in how it lists a multitude of areas that cement unity. Of these areas, the most pertinent to the social developmental paradigm is that of equality and human dignity.

The main premises behind the facet of equality is that all people are equal before the law, everyone has the same rights and responsibilities and no person may be discriminated against, unless the discrimination is validated (Republic of South Africa, 1995). This provides useful information and guidelines for service providers as they need to treat all service users as equal and of the same importance. This is specifically relevant to the most at-risk populations as the Bill of Rights provides the legislative basis for them to be uplifted.

Another crucial facet of the Bill of Rights that specifically regards the social developmental paradigm of the welfare arena in South Africa is that of human dignity. Due to the Apartheid system in the past, many individuals who were discriminated against were robbed of their sense of dignity and freedom to live a valued life (Republic of South Africa, 1997). The bill states that everyone has the right to inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected (Republic of South Africa, 1995). This ties in with other governing social service legislation as the *Code of Ethics* drafted by the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP, 2020). The *Code of Ethics* stipulates guidelines regarding how service delivery is to be rendered and how service users are to be treated. If service users can be assisted in increasing their sense of dignity, coupled with practical solutions to challenges (which in the case of poverty is often monetary-related) there is a positive chance that sustainable positive change can be achieved. If the aforementioned is achieved, the service users will have a greater chance at having freedom to live a valued life in the

way they deem appropriate. This directly ties into the capability approach developed by Sen (1979), which core premise revolves around the ability to attain meaning through having opportunities to pursue life on a personal decision basis. Therefore, human dignity as an ideal is well-suited to the social developmental paradigm and if coupled with financial literacy education initiatives, it can potentially establish self-uplifting cycles in individuals, instead of the self-defeating cycles that poverty produces.

2.6.3. The National Development Plan

The Summary Report on the White Paper (Republic of South Africa, 2016) states that chapter eleven of the National Development Plan placed special emphasis on a social protective function within the social developmental framework to address the needs of the vulnerable and at-risk populations (Republic of South Africa, 2016). It explains that effective community development can be a key strategy in enhancing individual- and community functioning in dire circumstances and that developmental social welfare can be a key path in ensuring that the most at-risk populations will have social protection and social support in the form of social service delivery throughout their lives (Republic of South Africa, 2012).

By enhancing social protection, individuals can be assisted more thoroughly in navigating dire circumstances. If social protection can be coupled with financial literacy initiatives that teaches individuals how to look after themselves financially it can create a positive cycle of systematic improvement. Important to note however, is that this will require input from all role-players in the social service sphere, from governmental practice (involving passing initiatives into legislation and providing funding to service providers) to service providers who teach and invest in individuals through the financial literacy initiatives. The individuals would also need to be willing and interested to improve their own circumstances.

Chapter three of the National Development Plan regards the economy and employment. It states that one of its key goals is to grow productivity, to raise the earnings of working people in order to attempt to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality (Republic of South Africa, 2012). It provides an overview of structural challenges to the economy and lists various challenges that need to be addressed. One of these challenges are low savings (Republic of South Africa, 2012). As stated

earlier in the chapter, financial literacy education studies conducted in other developing countries yielded impressive positive results regarding increase in savings, pointing to the fact that financial literacy education initiatives may be a valuable asset to accrue in the fight against poverty.

2.7. The dimensions of service provision

Even though South Africa has transformative and progressive legislation, the actual application of service rendering is often an uphill battle. The Summary Report on the White Paper (Republic of South Africa, 2016) indicated that in the initial review phase the meetings were attended by 151 governmental officials and 188 Non-Profit Organisation representatives. During the later stages, across 17 different districts, 2127 Department of Social Development officials, 441 practitioners, 427 service providers and 314 service users participated (Republic of South Africa, 2016). Though these numbers might seem like a lot, they are the national total of predominantly service renderers that provided input. Even if one averages out those numbers at approximately 3500 services deliverers, it is still miniscule in size in comparison with the amount of people who require social assistance and -protection services (the current amount of people living in poverty sits around 29 million people) (Statistics South Africa, 2018).

The shortage of social service deliverers can be attributed to various factors. The main factor is that of a skill shortage. A majority of studies have shown that the skill shortage can be attributed to an educated system that suffers from decades of neglect and dysfunction under the apartheid regime (Mateus, Allen-Ile, & Iwu, 2014; Breier & Erasmus, 2009; McGrath, & Akoojee, 2007). Therefore, it is of paramount importance that education be prioritized within the social developmental welfare approach that South Africa is following, making the case for financial literacy education initiatives even stronger. The challenges of having large scale poverty and having too little social workers in the job market still remain, however.

For instance: in 2006 a research study was funded by the Department of Labour. This study focused on key professions within South Africa that there was a shortage of. Social work was one of the identified professions. The report stated that there were 11 111 social workers registered with the South African Council of Social Service Professions against a population figure of 47 004 745 (Van Aardt, 2004). That equates

to 23.6 social workers per 100 000 service users (Republic of South Africa, 2009). The report explained that just for social workers to remain even with the social worker-to-service user ratio at that time another 3 282 social workers must have entered the job market by 2015. Whether the target was reached almost feels irrelevant as social workers still make up such a small part of the country's population. Even if the goals were exceeded momentarily, social workers would still make up a miniscule part of a country's population that is in desperate need of social service delivery. If a current estimate would to be made, that for example there are 100 000 social workers practicing in South Africa (which is nearly a 100% growth rate from the report in 2009 and therefore highly unlikely), in a population of 58 million that equates them to 0.17% of the population. From this observation one can deduce that the workload of social workers in South Africa is also ridiculously high.

In 2006, Engelbrecht conducted a study on the "brain drain" of social workers migrating to the United Kingdom. He explains that "brain drain" is a migration of professionally trained individuals or knowledge workers resulting in a "human capital flight", i.e. the human capital is no longer invested in the country where they live (Engelbrecht, 2006). This also has a significant impact on poverty, the service delivery sphere and the social developmental approach, as all the knowledge and experience that local social workers built up is lost when they migrate abroad. Engelbrecht (2006) does explain however, that the loss of expertise via the migration of South African social workers is not a unique phenomenon. That being as it may, the fact that the number of social workers in the country is minute in relation to the need, makes the migration stunt the progress of social development initiatives as the need continues to increase, but the service deliverers in the welfare sphere either decline, or grow at a rate that cannot keep up with the demand of needs that large scale poverty produces.

In 2009, around the time of the compilation of a skills shortage report, the Social Development Minister at the time, Mr. Zola Skweyiya revealed that many social workers were leaving the country due to better remuneration packages as well as working conditions (Republic of South Africa, 2009), confirming Engelbrecht's "brain drain" notion. Rasool and Botha (2012) and Mateus, Allen-Ile, and Iwu (2014) argue that a skill shortage contributes to high levels of unemployment and restricts a country's economy from growing. If a country's economy is not growing, it hinders the country from competing in the global market and contributes to poverty (Bohlman,

2010). Thus, for social service delivery within a social developmental paradigm to be as efficient and as effective as possible, service delivery must have a sustainable impact on service users. If not, the challenges and needs of service users will continue to increase while the means of dealing with them will decrease.

Therefore, if financial literacy education initiatives can be advocated and implemented on all levels of service delivery, there is a chance that social development can systematically start taking place via teaching service users how to live economically sustainably. If that succeeds, it means that the economy will have a more balanced investment from all participants, which will relieve some of the stress on it and the service users, which has the potential to produce positive change on interpersonal-, intrapersonal-, micro and macro levels. The Department of Social Development is the main governmental entity that is charged with the task of addressing social development and -welfare concerns (such as poverty).

2.8. The role of the Department of Social Development

The Department of Social Development is the branch-of-government mainly concerned with social welfare agendas and their implementation. They are involved with a multitude of welfare services including aspects such as: National Food Relief Programmes, Funding for Early Childhood Development Centres, Admission to an Old Age Homes, Home Based Community Based Care (People living with HIV/AIDS), Foster Care, Admission to Children's Homes, Child Protection Services, Adoption Services, Maintenance, Services to the Youth, Services to Women and Gender Issues, Services to Older Persons with Disabilities, Funding of Non Profit Organisations, Registration of Shelters and Drop in Centers, Training of Non Profit Organisations, Old Age Grants (Pension), War Veterans Grants, Child Support Grants, Foster Care Grants, Disability Grants (Republic of South Africa, 2019).

The Department of Social Development is partnered with the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA). SASSA is the agency responsible for paying social grants to grant recipients each month. According to the latest statistics available, there are 17 731 402 people receiving grants as of December 2018 each month. That is approximately 30.5% of South Africa's population. The grant figures put into perspective the magnitude of the poverty problem in South Africa.

The poverty problem is also magnified in cases of gross mismanagement and corruption, as was found with the previous minister of social development, Bathabile Dlamini. She appeared before the constitutional court multiple times, for instance, in a case where she got SASSA to pay R1 million to a private security company (Nkanjeni, 2019). She was also involved with a scandal where the Department of Social Development paid R500 000 to the SABC for her to appear on a talk show to boost her already fragmented image (Nkanjeni, 2019). Furthermore, SASSA utilised an illegal tender to use a company to do their grant transfers to recipients, which then backfired when they were unable to deliver the grants on time to the recipients causing social outburst and unrest (Nkanjeni, 2019).

As apparent from the examples of mismanagement at governmental level presented above, the poverty problem has many facets that need to be addressed if social development is to be adequately and sustainably achieved. There seems to be no focus from government or service providers on financial literacy education initiatives as an option towards social developmental needs and challenges. As this research is particularly concerned with financial literacy education as a potential buffer and antithesis agent against poverty, investigations have revealed that the only local research that has been done on this topic was more than a decade ago by Engelbrecht (2008, 2009). Not only is therefore, a lack in the local knowledge base that regards financial literacy education, but worryingly, research conducted by Engelbrecht (2008a) showed that social service providers viewed financial literacy education as job creation and therefore not their concern. Therefore, it is apparent that a mindset shift is also necessary if financial literacy education is to be pursued as it will take cooperation and synthesis between all role-players in social service delivery to make a sustainable impact.

2.9. Poverty alleviation from a social developmental welfare approach

Poverty alleviation in South Africa is approached from a social developmental welfare angle. Midgley (1995), who is regarded in South Africa as one of the primary authors on social development explained that social development relies on two aspects – the first is human development, i.e. help service users with their needs and challenges, while the second aspect is economic development to help service users become economically self-sustainable (Midgley, 1995). Due to the fact that South Africa's past led to an unequal society that was structurally prejudiced and warped in racially biased

terms, the first democratically elected government decided to follow a social developmental approach to social welfare. That meant that people who were discriminated against suffered in terms of physical aspects such as lack of education and lack of employment opportunities would now be the focus of social security and welfare assistance. In emotional terms, because they suffered from discrimination and inhumane treatment that jeopardized their dignity and infringed on their human rights, social development also looks to assist service users to work through trauma while enabling them to gain control of their circumstances.

As discussed earlier, after the decision was made, by the South African government to shift to a social developmental welfare approach, the White Paper for Social Welfare was drafted in 1997, with a major tenet being poverty alleviation. Since its draft in 1997, various scholars have conducted analyses of the implementation of the White Paper to uncover what the situation regarding poverty alleviation looked like in practical terms. Gray (2006) concluded in her analyses of social development in South Africa, after a decade of democratisation, that social development had been successful in reshaping welfare policy. She also states however, that in terms of poverty-, and social problem alleviation it has not been the case (Gray, 2006). Welfare policy is an important factor to consider when evaluating the impact of a social developmental welfare approach and thus a positive step forward. However, policy without implementation does not relieve any social stressors, as it is the implementation that brings the policy to life in the physical sphere when services are rendered to service users.

Holscher (2008) also conducted a review of the implementation of the White Paper and posed the question whether a true structural solution to a social developmental approach could be found if the government could not seem to work with social- and economic development in a coordinated manner. Lombard (2008) however, argues that the implementation of developmental social welfare is not as negative as the aforementioned authors proposed, as developmental social welfare covers a broader spectrum than just social development and has to be assessed in terms of social protection and service delivery as well (Lombard, 2008).

In terms of social protection, social grants come to mind. As stated previously in the chapter approximately 30.5% of South Africa's population are dependent on grants. The fact is that the government does provide grants to all 17 731 402 recipients and

in doing so, forms the lifeline of those recipients' month-to-month existence and thus, the contribution of social grants in addressing poverty cannot be ignored (Lombard, 2008). That being said, Lombard (2008) continues and explains that although the grants provided by the government do impact upon the survival of the poor, there has not been significant changes in levels of poverty and inequality, which has been confirmed by Ornellas and Engelbrecht (2020), more than a decade after the notions of the before mentioned authors.

2.10. Poverty indicators by household expenditure

An analyses of poverty alleviation from a social developmental welfare approach in South Africa, would be incomplete if poverty indicators by household expenditure is not taken into consideration. The latest statistics provided by Statistics South Africa indicate a spread of poverty across the country. The most recent survey conducted by Statistics SA is a living conditions survey conducted in 2015. The survey concluded that black African-headed households constituted for more than half (52.8%) of all household consumption expenditure, with white-headed households contributing the second most with 34.1%. Coloured-headed households only accounted for 8.7% of total expenditure (Statistics SA, 2015). Interestingly, the survey revealed that the median household expenditure for white-headed, as well as Indian/Asian-headed households were less inequal as their median and averages were more closely aligned (Statistics SA, 2015). This stands in contrast with the findings regarding black African-headed and coloured-headed households which indicated greater disparity as the median was nearly half of the average (Statistics SA, 2015). These findings confirm the structural inequality brought on by Apartheid that caused a divide in South African society, and the survey findings still reflect it after twenty-plus years of democracy.

In terms of provinces, Gauteng and the Western Cape provided the bulk of the country's household expenditure collectively at 57.8%. This is due to the fact that Gauteng is the province with the biggest population figure and Western Cape is the richest province with an average consumption expenditure figure of R163 220 and a median of R80 440 (Statistics SA, 2015). The survey found that Limpopo was the poorest province in terms of household expenditure with an average of R61 011 and a median of R31 925 (Statistics SA, 2015). Interesting to note is that both Gauteng and the Western Cape have large urban areas (which accounted for 82.2% of all expenditure), while Limpopo has more rural communities. Traditional areas, urban

informal areas and rural formal areas all contributed 11.2%, 3.7% and 3% of expenditure accordingly (Statistics SA, 2015). The survey found that the most noticeable inequality seemed to exist in urban-formal and rural-formal areas, where the median expenditure was less than half of what the average for those areas were, while in urban-informal and traditional areas, the average and median household consumption expenditures were much closer to one another (Statistics SA, 2015).

What can be deduced from this is that, even though poverty is found all across the country, urban-formal and rural-formal areas seem to experience its effects in varying levels of intensity, while urban-informal and traditional areas experience the effects on similar levels of intensity. However, it is to be noted that these deductions are based on levels of household expenditure alone and thus cannot be an accurate depiction as a sole variable that influences poverty. Household expenditure can however provide an indication of the funds available to differing households. What makes this significant is that some people may measure their well-being in materialistic terms, meaning that having money can influence their sense of self positively or negatively, depending on their attitude towards their monetary aspirations and current financial circumstances. If therefore, individuals adopt material wealth as an indicator of their own personal well-being, it elucidates a potential link between financial poverty and the capabilities approach. This being as, the capabilities approach is concerned with individuals having the choice to determine which aspects of their life warrants value attribution for example, financial well-being or material wealth (Sen, 1979).

2.11. The capabilities approach and poverty alleviation

Amartya Sen is an economist and philosopher who is one of the primary authors on the capabilities approach (1979). The core tenets of this approach are “functionings” “capabilities”, and “agency”. Hick (2014) explains that “functionings” refer to the various things a person succeeds in “doing or being”. An example of this would be being healthy. He also explains that “capabilities” refer to a person’s real or practical freedom to achieve the aforementioned “functionings” (Hick, 2014). This is also echoed by Banerjee (2015) who explains that the term “capability” refers to freedom of opportunity, rather than implying ability for doing something. An example of that would be the choice to eat healthy and exercise in order to *be* healthy. Fertig (2012) explains that “agency” regards individual autonomy that allows individuals to make choices that steer them towards achieving capabilities and functionings.

In order to conceptualize the capabilities approach and assess its relevance to the context of the study, it is pertinent that the various information presented previously be assessed through a capabilities approach lens. The three main tenets that will be discussed pertain to: the capabilities approach and poverty, legislation and education.

If one considers that statistics show that approximately half of South Africa's population (29 million people) live in financial poverty (Statistics South Africa, 2018) it raises the question whether this large clump of the population experience elements of well-being in their lives as money is needed in order to meet basic survival needs. Therefore, if one lacks the resources to fulfil and sustain these basic needs, it might have an impact on how one views and lives one's life. Assuming the capabilities approach lens in response to this query reveals an interesting argument of Sen (1992) regarding what "capabilities" entail. He explains that assuming a capabilities lens regards viewing people in terms of what they can do, rather than what they have or how they feel. He expressed that (a) poor people adapt to their circumstances and learn to be happy with less; (b) income and wealth are means to ends but not valuable ends in themselves; and (c) different people need different types and amounts of resources to achieve well-being.

By considering the insight of Sen (1992) provided above, it can be deduced that poverty can be conceptualized from a positive angle. This can be done by viewing the individuals who experience poverty in terms of their strengths and opportunities. Interestingly, Banerjee (2015) argued that "capabilities" refer to freedom of opportunity, rather than the ability to do something, which contrasts with the expression of Sen (1992) provided above. What is elucidated from this contrast is that the capabilities approach is at its core, a philosophical framework concerned with various iterations of seemingly, a strengths perspective. Saleeby (1992) was the first author to provide insight into the strengths' perspective and its application in the social work sphere. At its core, he (Saleeby, 1992) explained that this perspective is concerned with viewing individuals in terms of their various strengths, thus providing a more optimistic conceptualization and point of departure when addressing challenges.

Poverty as a socio-economic challenge contains a multitude of facets that need to be addressed in order to alleviate and improve the effects felt by the individuals caught within it. The capabilities approach can serve as a theoretical point of departure when

aiming to address issues of poverty. When considering the financial aspect of poverty, (i.e. the fact that individuals living in poverty do not have enough economic resources to meet needs that may arise), and by applying a capabilities approach to the situation, one can start to work towards improved financial circumstances. Since the capabilities approach is focused on the freedom of opportunities (Banerjee, 2015) that individuals experience, as well “what they can do” (Sen, 1992), i.e. their strengths, a picture starts to emerge how the capabilities approach can be a useful perspective to utilize when considering means of poverty alleviation.

These means can include assessing service users to determine their strengths, working with them to develop their strengths and then providing them with a platform to apply those strengths. A practical example of what this could look like is if one determines that the individual is gifted at doing needlework. One can then help them develop that skill by linking them with resources that can help develop their strengths and that can be used in a financially beneficial way. It is to be noted that initiatives such as the example described above, need to be coupled with some form of economic education and/or investment. By doing so, the potential for poverty alleviation can increase greatly if individuals are equipped with financial knowledge to help them manage their finances better. Sustained improvement in this regard can have a positive long-term effect that can help individuals to systematically raise themselves from their dire economic circumstances. An example of an economic education initiative is financial literacy education.

Financial literacy education initiatives have the capacity to advance service users’ capabilities through advancing their functionings. For e.g. if a service provider is able to teach financial literacy skills to a service user, which the service user then manages to apply it will lead to better management of finances which can lead to increased savings. If the service user realizes the value of saving, they can continue to save which will financially empower them. The financial empowerment can open more opportunities regarding decisions that they might not have had at an earlier stage due to their financial circumstances. In doing so, their basic functionings will increase which will enable them to focus on attaining (if they would wish to do so) opportunities that will stimulate their complex functionings.

It is important to note however, that financial literacy education initiatives will require investment from either private investors or the government in order to function most

efficiently. This is stated as the implementation of such initiatives would require large amounts of financial resources in order to ensure that the scope and efficiency of implementation are maximized as the socio-economic challenge that is poverty, is widespread across the country. This also highlights the potential for government to get involved (for e.g.), by passing legislation that mandates initiatives such financial literacy education be implemented as part of generalist practice and/or school curriculums. Thus, the larger the scope of poverty alleviation initiatives, the better the chances at improving the overall socio-economic climate.

2.12. Conclusion

This chapter conceptualized and contextualized the themes of poverty, vulnerable people and social work within a social developmental paradigm from a capabilities approach. It was elucidated that poverty is a widespread problem throughout South Africa, with vulnerable people often experiencing its effects the worst. It is crucial to attempt to empower the aforementioned via the implementation of financial literacy initiatives in order to increase their financial knowledge base and application.

Though South Africa's poverty context is unique due to conditions created under the Apartheid regime, it is classified as a developing nation. This is relevant as international financial literacy education studies in other developing nations have shown to have a positive impact on poverty alleviation efforts. Though South Africa's guiding legislative documents are transformative, applications of the guidelines offered in legislation are often non-existent or inadequate due to several factors such as corruption, mismanagement, and underpaid and overworked social workers.

This chapter will act as the bassline of understanding for the themes of the following chapter which regard the facilitation of financial literacy education within a social developmental paradigm from a capabilities approach.

Chapter 3: Analysing and operationalising financial literacy education initiatives in a social developmental paradigm

3.1. Introduction

This chapter rests on three main pillars of discussion: the capabilities approach, financial literacy education, and social entrepreneurship and -enterprise. The capabilities approach will be discussed in terms of what it entails, what are some limitations of it and what its relevance is to financial literacy education. Thereafter, the study will consider practical application of the capabilities approach by observing what can be learnt from international contexts and applications. Finally, an argument will be made for its importance and why the approach deserves attention.

The second tenet of the chapter, financial literacy education, will be discussed in terms of its relevance in relation to helping individuals deal with debt, while considering some financial literacy programs that are in circulation that can have value for the South African context. Thereafter, financial literacy education will be discussed in terms of a financial social work intervention by addressing certain skills that social workers will need to adequately present such programs.

The final facet of the chapter pertains to the theme of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship. An exposition will be presented what exactly social enterprise and -entrepreneurship entails, before looking at its potential relevance for financial literacy education mobilization in South Africa. The chapter will round off by examining challenges that could be faced in terms of the aforementioned before presenting a synthesis of all the facets in the concluding thoughts.

3.2. The capabilities approach

As discussed in the previous chapters, the capabilities approach is the underlying philosophical point of departure for this study. In order to fully contextualise its relevance with regards to issues of poverty and financial literacy education initiatives within a social developmental paradigm, further exposition is required. At its inception, the capabilities approach was designed as a contrasting, alternative approach to conventional economic research which stipulated factors such as income and wealth as measures of well-being (Kato, Ashley & Weaver, 2017). Instead, it focused on what people were able to do and be. A notable feature of the capabilities approach is that it

varies from other approaches by not focusing on the amount of resources an individual possesses, but rather deems the individual's ability to convert said resources into valuable outcomes as a main determinant when considering individual ability (Kato, Ashley & Weaver, 2017).

Robeyns (2005) comments that it is important to draw the distinction that the capabilities approach is not a theory that can explain phenomena (such as poverty or inequality). Rather, she states that it provides a framework and tools, which can be used to evaluate and conceptualise the aforementioned phenomena. This revelation highlights a potential strength of the capability approach – it provides a lens through which one can critically reflect on phenomena in a manner that encourages optimism by considering individual ability and strengths, rather than resources or circumstances. Crucial however, is that in order for an authentic evaluation to be undertaken, one needs to be aware of the limitations of the approach as well.

One such limitation lies in the operationalisation of the capabilities approach. Leßmann (2012) argues operationalising the capabilities approach is difficult in two regards. Firstly, its multi-dimensionality and secondly, the notion that freedom contributes to well-being. Any phenomena that is multi-dimensional can prove difficult to operationalize as managing and standardizing measures of application can be challenging. Leßmann (2012) expands on this notion by explaining that there exists a widespread agreement regarding plurality of dimensions, which should be considered when measuring well-being, yet no agreement exists regarding which dimensions may be more relevant to a particular context. Regarding the second challenge of freedom contributing to well-being, ambiguity seems to be the issue. One cannot assume that providing an individual with the freedom of opportunity and actions will automatically result in a positive correlation to well-being, as there are many factors that contribute to individual decision making.

This is also particularly important to consider when contextualizing the capabilities approach within the boundaries of the core tenets of this study, as there are various factors that contribute to the uniqueness of the South African context. Some questions that then emerge are issues such as: what is the capabilities approach's relevance to financial literacy education in South Africa; what are some practical applications for it; who are the service users and -providers that can benefit from a capabilities approach

application; what can be learnt from international applications and contexts; and why is it important that the approach deserves attention.

3.2.1. The capabilities approach's relevance to financial literacy education

Since the capabilities approach is concerned with providing individuals with opportunities to live and be in a manner that they deem valuable, financial literacy education can act as a medium through which individuals can empower themselves to make better financial decisions. Individuals experiencing financial hardship may view an increase in finance as an increase in value and personal well-being. This is echoed in how Aalbers (2019) provides insight regarding a concept titled *financialization*, which entails the growing influence of finance on individuals' functionings and well-being. Sherraden, Lough, Sherraden, Williams-Shanks, and Huang (2019) latch onto this notion by arguing that financial capability (and thereby, financial literacy education) has a larger role in overall well-being today than in the past. To attain a better sense of relevancy and synthesis between the capabilities approach and financial literacy education, practical examples and applications need to be considered.

Take for example, applying a capabilities approach framework to an individual struggling with poverty. The capabilities approach may inform the social worker to recognise potential strengths that the individual may have that can relate to financial capability such as an affinity for creating artisan items that can be sold to generate income (thus recognising the potential for financial improvement in the individual). The aspect of improving the financial capability of the individual can be advanced through the implementation of financial literacy education initiatives where social workers work together with individual to teach them how to utilise their artisan skills, alongside various financial skills to generate and sustain a form of income.

Importantly to note however, is that financial capability encapsulates more than just cultivating individual attributes but is also embedded in the opportunity and the ability to act (Kim & Sherraden, 2014). Sherraden et al (2013) explain that the opportunity to act is shaped by available financial institutions and existing policies, while the ability to act stems from initiatives that increase individuals' skills (such as financial literacy education initiatives aimed at improving the artisanal skills from the example above). From this exposition, it becomes clear that, the full extent of symbiosis between the

capabilities approach and financial literacy education lie in various spheres that need to function in unison. On a macro scale, policy can help create and inform opportunities to act, while on a micro level, financial education initiatives and the capabilities approach can inform the ability to act. Considering the aforementioned, the next question to be addressed then is what practical applications of the capabilities approach exist to inform service delivery?

3.2.2. Practical capabilities approach applications

Although the capabilities approach is regarded as a philosophical framework, it has been used internationally as the conceptual underpinning for projects, such as the United Nations' Human Development Report (UNDP, 2010) and the Human Rights Commission's approach to monitoring equality in the UK (Hick, 2012), showing its potential value as an underpinning towards service rendering. To explore practical applications of the capabilities approach, it is crucial to investigate its operationalization as a point of departure. By adopting the theme of financial capability as an operationalization of the capabilities approach in an economic format, one can attain insight regarding possible practical avenues to be explored.

In a social developmental paradigm, the role of social workers should not be underestimated in facilitating financial capability. Birkenmaier, Sherraden, Callahan, Frey, and Santiago (2018); Sherraden, Birkenmaier, and Collins (2018), as well as Sherraden and Huang (2019) all argue that social workers can provide financial education, counselling, and coaching to individual service users (through the development and implementation of financial capability services and programs), while also working to create beneficial financial policy and services. Huang, Sherraden, Despard, Rothwell, Friedline, Doran, and McKinney (2017) state that growing an interest in financial capability amongst social workers and building financial capability for all is one of the grand challenges for social work, indicating the importance of adequately operationalising the capabilities approach via the channel of financial capability enhancement. Sherraden *et al* (2019) argue that the most prominent ways in which these challenges can be addressed is through research, policy innovation, and professional education.

Research conducted by the Brown's School Centre for Social Development (CSD) at Washington University found that social work faculty, students, and practitioners

recognize the usefulness of financial knowledge and skills for effective practice but are largely unprepared to incorporate financial capability into their practice (Birkenmaier, Loke, & Hageman, 2016; Gates, Koza, & Akabas, 2017; Kindle, 2013; Loke, Watts, & Kakoti, 2013). This highlights the importance of adequately educating social workers in financial capabilities, to enable effective practice regarding financial knowledge and skills. Examples of financial capability initiatives in Taiwan and China illustrate policy innovation and professional education (Sherraden *et al*, 2019). Cheng (2019) explains that in the case of Taiwan, the government embraced building financial capability and assets as a strategy to reduce child poverty and decrease economic inequality, while Liu, Guo, and Zhou (2018) state that China has adopted the Targeted Poverty Reduction Plan, which is structured around building financial capability as the main approach towards poverty alleviation. This indicates the applicational value that the capabilities approach can have if financial capability is adopted as the vessel through which said application occurs. If then, the capabilities approach can be operationalized via financial capabilities in the form of research, policy innovation and education, the next point to be explored is the South African context in relation to these facets. Here, special attention needs to be attributed to the questions of “who” and “how”.

3.2.3. The capabilities approach in South Africa: Who and how?

The part of the population that are experiencing poverty, as well as the social workers who render poverty eradication services in South Africa should be the main focal point in conversations regarding financial capability. As is clear from the international attention that it (financial capability) receives, the potential benefit for a country such as South Africa, that experiences widespread poverty, should be clear. However, if assessing the local context against the same criteria presented above (research, policy innovation and professional education), the extent of the challenge in South Africa seems greater.

In terms of research, the field of financial capabilities has been largely understudied, except for recent contributions by Engelbrecht (2015) and Engelbrecht and Ornellas (2019). This points to a need for ongoing and regular research into the field in order to maximise the pace at which information can be attained and passed on to the relevant social service practitioners. In terms of policy, it is to be noted that South Africa has one of the most transformative constitutions and policy documents (as discussed in chapter two) in the form of the Bill of Rights (Republic of South Africa, 1995), the White

Paper for Social Welfare (Republic of South Africa, 1997) and the National Development Plan (Republic of South Africa, 2012). Although all these documents encapsulate a wide array of information, little attention is given to the theme of financial capability. This can be attributed to the fact that financial capability is a relatively new concept, but the question remains then whether the government should be flexible to adapt the policies to include themes of financial capability or not. In a country where poverty is widespread and social service delivery is struggling under a mismanaged system, the inclination should rather tend toward an attitude of “why not” rather than “why”.

In terms of professional education, South Africa will experience the same challenges in service delivery as experienced in other parts of the world where social workers stated that they are unprepared to incorporate financial capability into their service rendering (Birkenmaier, *et al*, 2016; Gates, *et al*, 2017; Kindle, 2013; Loke, *et al*, 2013). The question in South Africa’s case also pertains to whether the social workers understand or acknowledge the value that financial capabilities as a form of service delivery aimed at poverty eradication may have. This is stated as research conducted by Engelbrecht (2008a) indicated that some social workers did not view it as their job to incorporate such themes into their service rendering. This key question also forms a large part of the reasoning for this particular study, which also links with the criteria of professional education, as if they (the social workers) understood the value, perhaps their views might be different.

Other important role-players to consider are the service users experiencing poverty (who the financial capability initiatives are aimed at), as well as the public- and private structures that help design and implement the initiatives. For economic development amongst service users to truly occur, various systems would need to work together. These systems include the service users, non-government organisations (NGO’s), and the governmental organisations such as the Department of Social Development. One such approach that can be utilised, as a further form of financial capability operationalisation, is social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurship entails adopting market-based approaches to the solution of social problems (Bacq and Janssen, 2011). In social entrepreneurship, the perspective where social ventures are seen as a vehicle for creating social impact and, ultimately, social change in and for a particular community is adopted (Kimmit & Muñoz, 2018). For social entrepreneurship

to function effectively as an approach to eradicating poverty, all the aforementioned role-players need to work in harmony. This is often difficult to achieve as cross-sectional integration of role-players and resources can be challenging. This can also be seen in how Nega and Schneider (2014) state that, despite the attention that social entrepreneurship has received, to date, NGOs and [other role-players] have yet to achieve the type of structural transformation necessary for true economic development.

This highlights the importance of private- and public sectors working together to maximise the potential benefit of poverty eradication. Studies conducted in Tanzania have displayed an instance where this has been achieved (Dejaeghere, 2013). In the case mentioned above, DeJaeghere (2013) explains that the Tanzanian government implemented reforms in the education sphere, with a focus on self-reliance and economic sustainability, through an entrepreneurship educational discourse. This indicates willingness from the public sphere to engage in initiatives that are aimed at decreasing poverty and increasing economic self-sustainability via education. Role-players in the private sector, such as international organisations, NGOs, corporations and social entrepreneurs, assist the public sphere by providing funding for schools and shaping the means and outcomes of education (DeJaeghere, 2013; Mundy, 2006).

In the aforementioned study's case (De Jaeghere, 2013), the means and outcomes were targeted around the theme of entrepreneurship. Evaluation of outcomes and results of financial education-focused studies need to be undertaken in order to assess the long-term impact that financial education initiatives have on a population. The case of Tanzania, presented above, does provide hope for the South African context as Tanzania is also a third-world country that struggles with poverty. One certainty, however, is that in order for sustainable long-term change to be achieved, role-players from the public- and private spheres need to work in parallel to create opportunities for the facilitation of financial literacy education initiatives. Therefore, it would be essential to present an in-depth examination of financial literacy education as a concept in the following section.

3.3. What is financial literacy education?

Financial literacy education is a concept that can be regarded as part of a greater umbrella term of financial social work interventions. It is a multi-dimensional concept that overlaps and relates to several other concepts and disciplines (Engelbrecht, 2008c; Jacob, Hudson, & Bush, 2000; Goodwin-Groen, & Kelly-Louw, 2006). Though financial literacy is commonly understood to relate to financial knowledge and the ability to make beneficial financial decisions, a more encompassing term has been promoted within social work spheres – financial capability (Sherraden, Birkenmaier, & Collins, 2018).

In their arguments, Sherraden, Birkenmaier and Collins (2018) provide insight into what financial capability entails. They explain that, via the improvement of financial knowledge and skills, access to programs that create pathways to financial wellbeing (as well as policies that improve financial wellbeing) can be obtained. Financial capability, therefore, entails not only financial knowledge and skills, but also denotes access to financial opportunities to apply skills, while relating to financial policy that aids in the aforementioned endeavour.

Bearing in mind that financial literacy education falls under the umbrella of financial capability, the question is raised how a delineation between the two concepts can be achieved. By consulting the work of Jacob *et al* (2000), defining characteristics of financial literacy come to light. These core tenets seem to encapsulate three distinct, yet interconnected pillars, that all influence a person's ability to participate rewardingly in the economy (Engelbrecht, 2008c; Jacob *et al*, 2000).

Jacob *et al* (2000) provide insight regarding the core tenets and their nature. *Economic literacy* is the first tenet. This regards general knowledge of the economy and its functioning. Examples of concepts related to this tenet include scarcity, the interaction of supply and demand and inflation (Engelbrecht, 2008c; Jacob *et al*, 2000). The second tenet regards *consumer literacy*. This refers to the knowledge of rights and responsibilities required to make informed decisions about purchases via the comparison between prices (Engelbrecht, 2008c; Jacob *et al*, 2000). The third and final tenet pertains to *financial literacy* which involves understanding financial terms and concepts, that are used as the baseline for translating knowledge into responsible economic behaviour (Engelbrecht, 2008c; Jacob *et al*, 2000). Therefore, examples of

concepts that will align with this tenet includes aspects such as savings, interests, budgeting, insurance and credit (Engelbrecht, 2008c).

Engelbrecht (2008c) argues that of the three tenets mentioned above, the final tenet pertaining to financial literacy is the most crucial as it encapsulates the most principal role in determining the amount of money at a household's disposal. In keeping the aforementioned in mind, Jacob *et al* (2000), Goodwin-Groen and Kelly-Louw (2006), Lusardi and Mitchell (2006), and Engelbrecht (2008c) argue that therefore financial literacy is a vital set of skills that define how daily money matters are handled and what decisions are made.

In order to try and synthesize the conceptualization of financial literacy, Engelbrecht (2015) maintains that by considering various definitions of financial literacy, one can identify several determinants that provide useful insight into financial literacy as a concept. The key determinants can be summarised as the following: financial literacy pertains to having the knowledge, skills, values and habits associated with successful money management; financial literacy pertains to earning, spending, saving, borrowing, and investing and, financial literacy can thereby, enable people to make smarter financial choices. These smarter financial choices can help the individuals to work towards financial goals, develop confidence, become more aware of financial risks and opportunities, help plan realistically for the future, inform them regarding where financial help can be sought, while empowering them to respond competently to life events that influence day-to-day financial decisions (Engelbrecht, 2015). Therefore, in an over-simplified form, financial literacy pertains to people's ability to work with money, based on their understanding of money (Engelbrecht, 2015)

As apparent from the information provided above, in theory, it is clear to see that financial literacy can be a powerful tool in the pursuit of poverty alleviation initiatives. Important to consider however, are its potential practical applications. If financial literacy education initiatives can be used towards efforts of poverty alleviation, it can be regarded as a type of financial intervention. Callahan, Frey, and Imboden (2020) explain that financial intervention typically takes three forms: financial education, financial counselling and financial coaching. For the purposes of this study however, attention will be paid to the aspect of financial education.

Financial education is a powerful financial intervention strategy that places the power of responsibility into the hands of the service users. Callahan, Frey, and Imboden (2020) explain that financial education is especially relevant in cases where service users want to further their knowledge in order to help them move towards greater financial stability or goals. Financial education intervention initiatives can take the form of individual- or group educational sessions or workshops. Importantly to note however, is that such interventions may or may not be useful depending on the circumstances that the service users find themselves in (Menard, 2017; Fernandes, Lynch, & Netemeyer, 2014). This is as financial education is an intervention technique that requires service users to be self-directed, while taking responsibility regarding the information they need, how to obtain it, and how to go about taking continuous steps toward financial stability. Financial education stipulates that service users are mostly responsible for their own improvement, but the social worker should work alongside them to determine aspects such as: what knowledge is required, what are the goals that the individual has, how many sessions would be appropriate and whether follow-up session would be necessary. Studies conducted by Menard (2017) have elucidated however, that financial education intervention initiatives that entail follow-up sessions have been shown to be more effective in helping individuals change financial behaviours.

3.3.1. Financial literacy education and debt traps

Financial education initiatives can be especially valuable in terms of efforts aimed at poverty alleviation. As discussed in previous chapters, poverty is a multi-layered socio-economic problem. A major concern that regards poverty stricken, vulnerable populations is that the lack of financial knowledge, alongside poor financial decision making may lead to individuals becoming trapped in debt. This results in individuals experiencing a phenomenon titled “debt traps”. The phenomena of “debt traps” can be explained in the form of the “Bermuda debt triangle” (See figure 3.1 below). The Bermuda debt triangle is a representation of three interconnected pillars or determinants that can contribute to individuals falling into debt traps (Engelbrecht, 2009; Nash, Jenkinson, Veyro, & Sandlant, 2005; INSOL International, 2001). Engelbrecht (2009) provides insight regarding what the three pillars entail, namely survival debt, cognitive debt, and affective debt.

Survival debts regard the inability to obtain basic commodities that are seen as integral for survival and are thus unavoidable and out of control (Engelbrecht, & Ornellas, 2019; Engelbrecht, 2009). An example of survival debt would be families that take out a cash loan to buy groceries. Survival debt can be regarded as a primary force in individuals falling into debt traps as it is linked to needs that no person can go without. The second determinant regards cognitive debt. Engelbrecht and Ornellas (2019), as well as Engelbrecht (2009) explain that cognitive debt can be largely ascribed to a lack of understanding or knowledge pertaining to financial behaviour, i.e. financial illiteracy. An example of cognitive debt could entail an individual that is unaware how interest rates work. They might find, that as they are paying back a loan, they fall further behind on payments as interest rates keep increasing the amount owed as time passes. This results in the individual being unable to get ahead of the interest rate curve, which results in their debt growing every month, systematically draining their resources and plummeting them further into debt. The third determinant of the Bermuda debt triangle pertains to affective or emotional debt (Engelbrecht & Ornellas, 2019; Engelbrecht, 2009). An example of this can be individuals that are living in poverty but want to hold a spectacular birthday party for their children. They decide to take out a loan to fund the party as they feel guilty for not being able to provide what their children wants. Thus, since the individual lacks consistent or meaningful income, they cannot pay back the loan, resulting in their debt growing over time, and their affective state systematically deteriorating into hopelessness or despair as they become more stressed. Figure 3.1 is a graphical illustration of the Bermuda debt triangle.

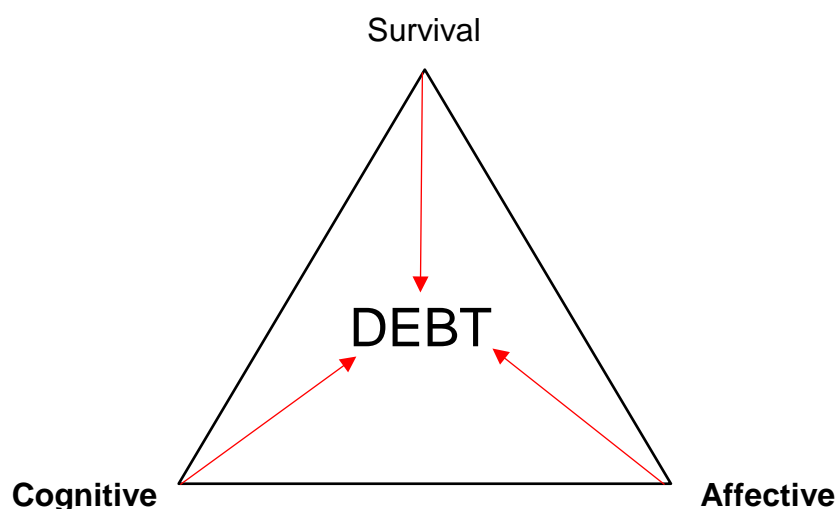


Figure 3.1: The Bermuda Debt Triangle (Engelbrecht & Ornellas, 2019; Engelbrecht, 2009)

Financial literacy initiatives can be useful in the fight against debt traps in that they can assist individuals in building financial knowledge, which can translate into more responsible financial decisions being made. If individuals, through financial literacy education, can learn to comprehend fundamental financial concepts it can empower them to apply it to their lives. In doing so, the determinants of debt traps can be counteracted and systematically, over time, nullified. This can result in individuals steadily uplifting themselves out of debt and poverty.

3.3.2. Financial literacy education programs

Since a clear picture now exists regarding the importance of financial education initiatives, a financial education program that is currently in operation will now be discussed. Hoge, Stylianou, Postmus, and Johnson (2020) postulate that financial education programs have flourished in recent times. They explain that the programs have been offered through various organisations such as corporate extensions, businesses, secondary schools and community colleges. It is to be noted however that these authors write from an American context. South Africa's context in terms of financial education initiatives looks different. There are not many role-players that engage in such initiatives on local soil. An overview of an example case study of a successful initiative as postulated by Hoge, Stylianou, Postmus, and Johnson (2020) will be presented.

The program to be discussed originated in St. Louis, Missouri, in 2001. The program is titled the Redevelopment Opportunities for Women's Economic Action Program (*REAP*) and was originally founded by the Family Forward organization, which is a non-profit organization operating in St. Louis, Missouri, in the United States of America.

This program is concerned with the intersection of poverty, oppression, and violence while providing financial information to intimate partner violence survivors (Hoge, Stylianou, Postmus, & Johnson, 2020; Sanders, Weaver, & Schnabel, 2007). The REAP program incorporates individual and group sessions and covers topics that include money and power, developing a cost of living plan, building and repairing credit, and banking and investing (Hoge, Stylianou, Postmus, & Johnson, 2020). Weaver, Sanders, Campbell, and Schnabel (2009) explain that the effectiveness of this program was evaluated through a survey that was conducted. The survey

consisted of a sample of 67 survivors of intimate partner violence. They were randomly assigned to participate in the program and were asked to fill in a survey before and after the completion of the program. Results of the survey indicated that the group that participated in REAP experienced significant increases in terms of financial literacy and financial self-efficacy (Hoge, Stylianou, Postmus, & Johnson, 2020). Though this program is specifically aimed at survivors of intimate partner violence, it is still a viable program to consider in terms of financial education initiatives. This is as, the themes covered in this program can be useful to any individual who lacks in knowledge and application of financial skills, as they cover practical themes that relate to everyday financial behaviour.

Another program to consider is the Adult Basic Education Training (*ABET*) program. ABET is a South African program that was developed in the early 1990's. ABET is a programme that focusses on teaching adults, who have not had the opportunity to learn or lack basic, educational skills. The program also focuses on equipping its members with practical skills in the form of training, to help them apply the skills that they learn to a workplace scenario. ABET can be a crucial tool at the disposal of social welfare initiatives, as a large number of adults are uneducated due to the previous Apartheid regime. Basic education is crucial as it can help inform the adults regarding concepts such as responsibility, accountability, alongside practical skills like money management. Adults engaging in ABET can also help improve home circumstances in families that live in dire socio-economic areas if nurtured over time. Should focus be placed on themes such as financial literacy education, it can create the potential of a positive money management cycle, while also providing a platform for the adults to teach the children the same skills. In doing so, it provides the opportunity of culmination into more positive family structures and dynamics, via alleviated experiences of poverty.

Interestingly, Boyadjieva and Ilieva-Trichkova (2018) state that all studies of participation in adult education reveal that 'the adults most in need of education and training are those with the least access to lifelong learning opportunities, in the form of adults with low level or no qualifications, those in low-skilled occupations, the unemployed and economically inactive, older people and the least skilled. This highlights the importance of social developmental initiatives focusing on ABET as a

potential buffer against dire family circumstances, fuelled by socio-economic circumstances.

Furthermore, data show that fewer public than private resources are invested in training and that the role of the state is less than that of companies and families (European Commission, 2013; Boyadjieva & Ilieva-Trichkova, 2018). This echoes the need for all role-players to actively be involved in financial intervention initiatives for maximum potential effect. If multiple role-players, i.e. the private- and public sectors are involved in financial intervention initiatives, a greater chance exists of programs such as ABET and REAP providing benefit against socio-economic problems, such as poverty.

The opportunity exists for social workers to draw inspiration from programs such as REAP and ABET. What is apparent, is that financial education programmes contain specific themes that should be included in education efforts. Engelbrecht (2008b) presents an exposition of such possible themes:

Financial values: The realistic and financially sound values in terms of wants versus needs; responsible consumer behaviour; pitfalls in purchasing and consumption.

Basic banking: The rationale of banking services and why they are used; different types of accounts for different needs and how to use them; how to open a bank account.

Financial planning and budgeting: Figuring out expenses; developing a basic line- item budget; how to do day-to-day, medium- and long-term financial planning.

Relevance and options for saving: The importance and benefits of savings; methods of savings; how to develop a savings plan; how to maintain savings; types of saving instruments and providers of saving products; health, life, event, funeral, and asset assurance.

Credit and debt management: Understanding credit; importance of paying bills on time; consumer loans; how to recover from bad credit; how to avoid ongoing indebtedness.

Asset building and home ownership: Credibility of different assets; preparing for home ownership; how to buy a house; home loans; additional housing-related financial matters.

A pertinent question in this regard, however, is what social workers consider their role to be in terms of financial education efforts. To aid in answering this, the following section will look at knowledge and skills that are needed for financial social work practice.

As financial literacy education can be regarded as a form of financial intervention, it is imperative that the social workers providing the services are knowledgeable of the various elements that are intertwined in the process. However, in terms of financial social work, practitioners often have limited financial knowledge (Birkenmaier, Callahan, Sherraden, McClendon, & Huang, 2020; Despard & Chowa, 2012; Loke, Watts, & Kakoti, 2013). It is argued that the formal education systems that are training social workers do not enact enough emphasis on financial social work services. This leaves the new (as well as the more experienced) social workers in a difficult position as they are forced to expand their knowledge while practicing in the workforce. In essence, this on its own is not a catastrophe as the opportunity still exists for improvement. However, poverty can be self-sustaining (due to its multi-layered complexity) and thereby keep increasing if social workers are “unequipped” to appropriately address it. If social workers need to wait until they enter the workforce to learn about financial social work, it means they will constantly be working from the backfoot.

3.3.3. Financial social work: Necessary skills

Hope exists however, as a growing body of literature points to the need for additional preparation of social workers post-graduation in terms of financial social work practice. Financial social work is an interactive and introspective, multidisciplinary approach that helps individuals explore and address their unconscious feelings, thoughts and attitudes about money. This self-examination process enables people to improve their relationship with their money and thus establish healthier money habits that lead to improved financial circumstances (Frey, Hopkins, Osteem, Callahan, Hageman, & Ko, 2017; Frey, Svoboda, Sander, Osteen, Callahan, & Elkinson, 2015; Despard & Chowa, 2012).

Perhaps the best way to help prepare social workers for adequate financial intervention is to equip them with the appropriate skills for financial practice. Sherraden, Birkenmeier and Collins (2018) describe necessary skills for financial social work practice. Each relates to a distinct area of personal finance while being interconnected with other areas. Some of these pertinent skills will be discussed below.

The first skill to be discussed is that of direct practice with individuals and families. This skill requires a myriad of financial skills and can be utilized within a variety of professional social work roles such as casework, counseling, and therapy, covering a variety of financial topics (Birkenmeier *et al*, 2020). For example, if the topic is financial management, social workers can assist service users by helping them with initial budgeting, managing budgets, and reflecting on spending. If the topic is debt, social workers can assist service users by offering strategies for addressing household and problem debt, while helping service users to negotiate debt with creditors. Important to note – though social workers can assist service users with a basic level of competency, referral to specialized assistance may be especially important (Birkenmeier *et al*, 2020).

The second skill pertains to financial practice with a life course perspective. This skill stipulates that social workers need to understand service users' financial lives from a life course perspective and as individual- and societal circumstances change, various financial challenges may arise (Sherraden *et al*, 2018; Morrow-Howell, & Sherraden, 2015). An example of this can take the form of younger people needing to manage their money while they are seeking employment, or older people who need to face decisions about retirement and potential old-age care. Crucially, service providers need to consider a wide range of social influences that may have an influence of individuals' financial capability (Birkenmeier *et al*, 2020).

The third and final skill to be discussed is that of practice with organisations, communities, and policy. Skills that relate to organisations, communities and policy are of vital importance as forces beyond the scope of individuals or families often shape many of their financial problems (Sherraden *et al*, 2018). By changing social conditions, social work practitioners can improve conditions within organisations or communities to create better financial products and services (Birkenmeier *et al*, 2020).

An example of a form this could take regards social workers joining local coalitions to expand opportunities for affordable, convenient bank accounts for the unbanked.

Financial social work can be an integral tool in the war against poverty. It is currently understudied and underutilized in South Africa. If a way can be found to bridge theory and practice, the potential for large-scale positive impact exists. A question that lingers regards what the best way forward is, in terms of poverty alleviation initiatives. If both the public-, and private sectors can unite in the fight against poverty, the odds of decreasing it can significantly increase. Financial social work initiatives can be operationalised via the amalgamation of the public- and private sectors in the form of social entrepreneurship and -enterprise ventures, which will be discussed in the next section.

3.4. Social entrepreneurship as an operationalisation of financial education

As a point of departure, it is firstly crucial to understand what is meant by social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurship is a concept that is characterised by the objective to invest money back into society by focusing on funding various endeavours. These endeavours can take any form, as long as they are aimed at “giving back” to society. Another key characteristic is that social entrepreneurship is operationalised through the business model concept of social enterprise. Although various studies targeted at the concept of social enterprise have been undertaken, the lack of a uniform definition seems to be a scholarly trend (Becchetti & Borzaga, 2010). Despite the lack of a uniform definition, social value seems to be a key focus (Dacin, Dacin, & Tracey, 2011).

This focus on social value is a key focus that separates social enterprises from normal business enterprises. At its core, this model entails the running of an organisation as a normal for-profit organisation, with its primary focus on enriching and uplifting the community or society around it, instead of putting personal profit margins first. Tent (2015) echoes this sentiment by explaining that, in a case of a social enterprise setting, the key characteristic is utilising the resources for the aim the business was created for (e.g. by targeting a specific social issue), rather than focusing on profits for the sake of the shareholders. An example of this can be a bakery who employs homeless people, teaches them skills that can help them generate an income, and then hiring them to work at the bakery.

Baring the aforementioned concepts in mind, in order to identify their value for South Africa, one needs to consider how many social enterprises exist and how they create social value. In doing so, one will be able to better localise the context and will be able to analyse said businesses against the themes that are pertinent to this study, such as poverty, as well poverty alleviation efforts via the medium of financial social work initiatives.

Studies conducted by Visser (2011) highlighted various social enterprise initiatives that operate in South Africa. He provides examples of entities, such as Men on the Side of the Road (an organisation that is focused on reducing poverty by targeting homeless men and teaching them skills focused around manual labour), the Awethu Project (an organisation focused around encouraging, fostering, and funding entrepreneurial projects for youths that live in impoverished socio-economic areas), Students in Free Enterprise (now known as Enactus), which is a global organisation focused around university students facilitating developmental projects in their communities, and the Community and Individual Development Association which was established to provide higher levels of education in townships. Though these are all classified as social enterprises by Visser (2011), the Awethu Project is the only entity that does not operate as a non-profit organisation. This is also reflected in an article written by Ressel (2018) where he argues that South Africa does currently not have a legal business entity that recognises the dual mandate of a genuine social enterprise. He argues that it is imperative that South Africa establish legal social enterprises as traditional non-profit funding is shrinking every year and investors usually seek a form of self-sustainability from the ventures they invest in (Ressel, 2018). This highlights the potential value of social enterprises operating as for-profit organisations as it will enable them to be self-sufficient.

Ressel (2018) does provide insight into two organisations that are on the path of becoming social enterprises in the form of Balambie (a locally made child care solution that produces baby cots out of hardened cardboard) and Brownies and Downies (a brownie bakery that teaches mentally challenged individuals skills and provides them with employment). He argues however, that both these organisations are still corporatizing and thus still operate more in the non-profit sphere.

From the cases presented above, it is apparent that there is a lack of true social enterprises in South Africa. Should more social enterprises be established, it can

potentially increase the efforts made by non-profits and governmental organisations at addressing the variety of socio-economic problems that face the country.

3.4.1. The importance of social enterprise

As conveyed in the previous chapters, poverty is a complex problem with no one-uniform solution. For the purposes of this study however, a focus is placed on financial literacy education as a potential medium through which poverty alleviation efforts can be focused. Considering that South Africa's department of social development, as well as the various non-profits are struggling to meet the needs of the service users, the importance of considering social enterprise ventures as a vehicle of financial literacy operationalisation is elucidated. Such an example is explained by Johnsen (2017) within the United Arab Emirates (UAE) context. This example is evident of the fact that social enterprise has received growing attention in the last few years as a potential solution to identify socio-economic developmental imperatives. Social enterprise initiatives are thus mobilized by the promotion of entrepreneurship as a potential countermeasure to unemployment (Fisher, 2013; Johnsen, 2017).

In stimulating entrepreneurship, social enterprise can have long-term benefits for the economy in that it can equip individuals who are not contributing to the economy, with skills and employment - the most pertinent of these skills being education in the form of financial literacy education. This can help individuals living in poverty to avoid falling deeper into poverty. If social enterprises can focus on financial literacy education, while coupling it with the concept of entrepreneurship, the potential for starting and sustaining positive cycles of money management can be a viable poverty alleviation strategy. To fully localize the context of social enterprise in South Africa, challenges facing its mobilisation need to be discussed.

3.4.2. Challenges facing social enterprise in South Africa

South Africa experiences various challenges in regard to the establishment and mobilisation of social enterprises. The biggest challenge standing in the way of social enterprises is sustainable resources in the early years of the entity's existence (Ressel, 2018). According to Ressel (2018), the challenge of having a viable, commercial offering can stunt the growth of the organisations in the early days while they try and balance aspects, such as achieving their social aims, while navigating the red tape experienced through dealings with government and issues of impact and

sustainability. Since the entities need to be commercially viable (in order to generate enough income to be self-sufficient), they may also experience difficulties in finding balance between operating as a non-profit (and thus achieving their social aims) and a for-profit (attaining enough capital to keep achieving the social aims). Within the structure of the social enterprise business model and its conceptualisation, another challenge becomes apparent.

The Gordon Institute of Business Science (2019) explains that, within the understanding of what social enterprise entities entail, lies another challenge. Since social enterprises are comprised of a balance of non-profit and for-profit ventures, they argue that this phenomenon challenges our (as South Africans) cultural understanding of charity by stating – to make money out of social services is interpreted as inherently wrong and counter-intuitive to the mission-focus of civil society (Gordon Institute of Business Science, 2019). This indicates a challenge of mindset or perspective that needs to be changed in order for the full potential of social enterprises to be realised.

Finally, in considering the current system of a social developmental welfare approach in South Africa, it becomes apparent that is not sustainable as the welfare system is predominantly operating on a grants system (Gordon Institute of Business Science, 2019). This, coupled with a fractured relationship between civil society and the government (that subsidises, rather than funds non-profits focused on education, welfare and health), further adds to the challenge of sustainability, continuously deepening socio-economic problems and hampering the establishment and mobilisation of social enterprises.

As discussed above, securing and sustaining resources in the first few years of operation can be extremely difficult for social enterprises. The Gordon Institute for Business Science (2019) explains that if social enterprises register as both a non-profit and a for-profit entity, they can access both grant- and commercial funding. A further alternative to look at entails monetarily empowering individuals who may be unable to afford credit at normal banks, in essence adopting the same approach as Grameen Bank, a Bangladeshi bank that provides small loans to poor people for business, housing, or education (Chopra, 2010). If a similar system can be adopted in South Africa, coupled with financial education initiatives, the potential exists that it can be a workaround for the challenge that social enterprises face in the first few years. In

essence, one can then empower groups of people to systematically establish their own social enterprises over time.

According to Mkandawire (2004) and Patel and Mushonga (2014), the focus of developmental states (in terms of social welfare) should be on developing human capabilities and the redistribution, production, reproduction, protection and promotion of human well-being. These focal points highlight the developmental social policies that are required for societal change to be truly achieved (Patel and Mushonga, 2014). A way that such aspects can be integrated into a social enterprise and social welfare paradigm is through corporate social responsibility negotiations, policies and contracts. In terms of poverty alleviation, the author posits that these aspects should encapsulate a focus on socio-economic issues, with especial reference to discourses on poverty and potential poverty alleviation strategies (e.g. financial literacy education initiatives).

By considering the multitude of factors that impact upon poverty, it is clear to see that there is no one, uniform solution. Being as that may, if one is able to empower individuals to uplift themselves economically, the potential exists that poverty can, over time, systematically be reduced. As a means of achieving this, the operationalization of financial social work interventions (especially in the form of financial literacy education) through the medium of social entrepreneurship and -enterprise ventures could be a path that is worth exploring, as it has been shown to provide positive results elsewhere on the globe.

3.5. Conclusion

This chapter comprised of three core tenets of discussion – the capabilities approach, financial literacy education, and social enterprise and -entrepreneurship. The capabilities approach was discussed in terms of what it entails, and its relevancy as a theoretical framework for service delivery involving financial literacy initiatives. There was explained how it could help inform social workers in adopting a more strengths-based perspective when rendering financial social work interventions with service users. Important international applications of the capabilities approach were discussed before issues related to its limitations were elucidated. Finally, this section rounded off by regarding the current state of capabilities approach applications in South Africa, in terms of themes such as research, policy, innovation and professional education.

The second tenet of the chapter pertained to financial literacy education and what it entails. Insight was provided regarding its usefulness in relation to service users who struggle with debt in various forms. Two programs, namely, REAP and ABET were explained to provide insight regarding current financial literacy education programs that exist and what they entail. There was concluded that research indicates that social workers need better education with regards to facilitating financial social work initiatives as most feel unequipped to adequately render financial social work services to service users. In closing this tenet, insight was provided regarding pertinent financial social work skills that social workers need to adequately facilitate financial literacy education services.

Finally, the theme of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship was discussed. Information was provided regarding the potential value that the aforementioned could hold for financial social work if it could be utilized as a vehicle for the operationalization of financial social work in the form of financial literacy education initiatives. The section concluded by shedding light on various challenges that face social enterprises within the South African context. The following chapter pertains to the empirical study that was conducted, where reflections and comparisons between the literature- and practical spheres will be drawn.

Chapter 4: Empirical study on the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in social development.

4.1. Introduction

This chapter pertains to the third objective, as outlined in chapter one, and regards the empirical investigation of the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in social development. Chapter one encapsulated a literature background of the research topic, before establishing a goal for the research study. The goal for this study was to develop an understanding of the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in social development. Chapter two presented further information related to the background of the study by specifically focusing on the conceptualisation of poverty within a developmental social welfare paradigm. The main aspects presented in the aforementioned conceptualisation regarded the contextualisation of poverty, as well as the current landscape related to governing legislature and the dimensions of service provision as delineated by the Department of Social Development before finally, considering the value that the capabilities approach may have as a theoretical point of departure.

Chapter three provided further insight into the research topic by presenting a continuation of the discussion related to the capabilities approach's, especially in terms of its relevance to, and relationship with financial literacy education initiatives. It also contained further expositions related to the theme of financial literacy education with a particular focus on financial literacy education's relationship with debt, which financial literacy programs exists and what can be learnt from them. Chapter three was concluded by discussing social enterprise and -entrepreneurship as a potential vehicle for the operationalisation of financial literacy education. Chapter four will present the empirical findings in relation to the perceptions of social workers regarding the role of financial literacy education in social development.

Section A

This section's purpose is to provide a concise reflection on the research methodology utilised throughout the process. Important to note that this section will be analytical in nature, and as such will not provide overviews of the various themes. For a detailed discussion of the research methodology utilised, see chapter one.

4.2. Research Methodology

The section to follow will reflect on various aspects pertaining to the research methodology utilised, with a specific focus placed on elements such as the research approach, research design, sampling methods, data collection measures, and measures for data analysis.

4.2.1. Research Approach

A qualitative research approach was utilised for the purposes of this study. Qualitative research refers to research that regards participants' perceptions, experience, and accounts of meaning (Schurink, Fouche, & De Vos, 2011)). A qualitative research approach was utilised as it can be useful in exploring questions of "why", indicating that qualitative research approaches are concerned with attaining insight into certain phenomena (Guest, Namey, & Mitchell, 2013; Morehouse, 2012; Milena, Dainora, & Alin, 2008). This approach was therefore appropriate as the researcher aimed to attain insight regarding the perception of social workers regarding the role of financial literacy education in social development. Furthermore, the qualitative research approach was utilised in parallel with a deductive reasoning logic. Deductive reasoning tends to encapsulate slower, more deliberate analytical processes, in comparison to inductive reasoning and is noted as moving from the general to the specific (Heit, & Rotello, 2010). Deductive reasoning was utilised to provide the researcher with a broader, more general understanding of the perceptions of social workers regarding the role of financial literacy education in social development. The researcher utilised this understanding to help inform the literature study that was conducted. To be noted however, is that the empirical study resulted in additional aspects that the researcher had not considered in his literature study. This resulted in the researcher revisiting literature, and obtaining new literature, as was necessary, thus indicating a movement between deductive and inductive reasoning applications. The researcher found the application of the abovementioned research approach to be successful during his

empirical investigation. The only challenge that was experienced regarded the initial phases of the literature study, when the researcher found it difficult to attain sources that were relevant to his study. This challenge was however resolved, and no other challenges associated with the research approach was experienced by the researcher.

4.2.2. Research Design

The study utilised exploratory and descriptive design methods. Exploratory research design allows the researcher to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or individual (Blaikie, 2000), making it appropriate to the study as the researcher wanted to obtain insight into the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in social development. According to Schurink, Fouche, and De Vos (2011), Scott and Garner (2013) and Ravitch and Carl (2016), descriptive research designs should be utilised when one wants to formulate a picture regarding specific details of a situation by focusing on “how” and “why” questions. Thus, as the researcher wanted to obtain insight into the perceptions of social workers, answering questions of “how” and “why” would provide depth to the study and thus made the application of a descriptive research design appropriate. Therefore, both exploratory- and, descriptive research designs were appropriate to the study as they allowed the researcher to gain a better understanding of various aspects pertaining to the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in social development. In summation, the application of both, exploratory, and descriptive research design were successful throughout the process. The researcher experienced no challenges in this regard.

4.2.3. Sampling Methods

Snowball sampling was utilised as the sampling method of this study. The researcher applied a snowball sampling method by identifying members of a population (in this case the social workers) and then asking those members to identify other members of the same population, as in accordance with the guidelines on snowball sampling provided by Thompson (2002), Bloor and Wood (2006) and Scott and Garner (2013). Snowball sampling was appropriate to employ as it can be utilised when there is a lack of access to participants, or a lack of knowledge related to obtaining participants (Scott, & Garner, 2013). Snowball sampling was especially useful due to the fact that the theme of financial literacy education in its relation to social development has been

largely understudied in the South African context, except for recent contributions by Engelbrecht (2015) and Engelbrecht and Ornellas (2019). As such, no networks of participants had been established thus far, further highlighting the appropriateness of the utilisation of a snowball sampling method.

The inclusion criteria of the study were as follows:

- Social workers who have more than one year of frontline experience (as they needed to be able to reflect on their work and experiences);
- Social workers who are registered with the South African Council of Social Service Professionals (SACSSP);
- Social workers who needed to work directly towards poverty eradication;
- Social workers who needed to be conducting a generalist form of practice (for e.g. not working in a drug rehabilitation centre);
- Social workers who were willing to conduct the interviews in their own personal capacity;
- Social workers who either worked in the public- or private sectors.

The study also contained a criterion for exclusion, as to be noted below:

- Social workers who practiced in more specialised areas (for e.g. a drug rehabilitation centre);
- Social workers who worked in sectors not pertaining to poverty eradication;
- Social workers who were unwilling or unable to conduct the interviews in their own personal capacity.

The researcher found the sampling process to be quite challenging. This is stated as the researcher found it difficult attaining the contact information of social workers who were appropriate and willing to participate in the study. The biggest challenge pertained to the lack of correspondence from potential participants. The researcher resolved this challenge however, by sending electronic mail to numerous potential participants. He continued this process until enough participants had been attained. The sample consisted of eighteen participants. Scott and Garner (2013) argue that the minimum, acceptable size of a qualitative sample is fifteen participants. Given (2008) argues that a sample of fifteen to twenty participants is usually appropriate for saturation to be achieved, making the researcher's sample of eighteen participants satisfactory. Saturation is the point in data collection where no new information

emerges (Given, 2008; Scott and Garner, 2013). The researcher attained saturation with his sample size after eighteen participants had been interviewed. Saturation had been achieved after the researcher realised that he was not obtaining any new data from participant eighteen indicating that no further interviews would be necessary.

The research participants were all contacted in their personal capacity via the medium of electronic mail. All the participants were briefed about the purpose, benefits and the potential risks associated with the research study, prior to the commencement of the respective interviews. All participants were also given an informed consent form to sign to ensure that they were aware of all the ethical considerations associated with the study, such as their right to refuse to answer and withdraw at any time without consequences. See annexure two for the full informed consent form. Due to the fact that all the interviews were conducted over Zoom, which is a video-calling platform, and in the participants' personal capacity, it was unnecessary to obtain clearance from the participants' respective organisations as they were not being interviewed in their professional, organisational capacity. The duration of the interviews varied between thirty and sixty minutes, respectively.

4.2.4. Data Collection

Since the study was qualitative in nature, the researcher implemented a semi-structured interview schedule, with a focus on predominantly open-ended questions, while also using closed-ended questions. Scott and Garner (2013) explain that semi-structured interviews can be useful when trying to maintain aspects of flexibility in the interview. By not adhering to a rigid schedule, there is room to explore and probe participants' responses to ensure that adequate depth is attained. The mix of open- and closed-ended questions allowed the researcher to simultaneously probe for depth and look for specific responses from participants. The semi-structured interviews were conducted by asking a series of pre-established questions. See annexure one for the complete interview schedule utilised by the researcher.

Owing to the global Covid-19 pandemic that swept the globe, the World Health Organisation advocated for social distancing measures to be implemented globally to help deter the rapid rate at which the disease was spreading (WHO, 2020). As such, the researcher decided to conduct his interviews over the video calling platform, Zoom, to help ensure that interpersonal contact was decreased, and social distancing

enhanced. The researcher asked all participants, prior to the interviews, whether they would be comfortable utilising Zoom or whether they wanted to utilise different measures such as WhatsApp video-calls. All eighteen participants indicated that they were comfortable using Zoom as the platform from which to conduct the interviews. Zoom, as a platform, was also beneficial to the researcher as it included a recording function, that allowed the researcher to record the interviews, so that he could transcribe them after the interviews were concluded. All participants provided consent for the researcher to record the interviews. Furthermore, the utilisation of Zoom as the medium through which the interviews were conducted also meant that the recordings of the interviews could be stored safely on the researcher's password-protected computer, ensuring no unwarranted use of the data by exterior parties. The interviews were conducted from the eighth of May 2020 to the twenty-fourth of June 2020. No challenges were experienced by the researcher or the participants related to Zoom. Both parties navigated the platform with relative ease, and in cases where participants struggled, the researcher assisted them through the troubleshooting process. Specifically, in one instance, the participant's microphone on her mobile phone was not connected. The researcher proceeded to talk the participant through the process until the participant managed to get her microphone to work. Apart from the aforementioned, no other challenges were experienced during the data collection stage.

4.2.5. Data Analysis

Data analysis can be regarded as the process whereby the researcher inspects, transforms, and categorises the collected data with the aim of discovering useful information, as well as suggesting conclusions and recommendations (Schurink *et al*, 2011; Scott and Garner, 2013). The researcher started conducting data analysis after all eighteen participants had been interviewed. The data that was collected was analysed by using thematic content analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic content analysis emphasizes examination and the recording of data patterns or themes within collected data. Thematic content analysis was conducted through a **process of coding** in six phases. The process entailed the familiarization with collected data, generating initial codes, searching for themes among codes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and producing the final report. Important to note is that a **denaturalisation process** was utilised in the transcription phase as the focus

was on the content, rather than the manner in which it was said. In a practical form, this resulted in the researcher omitting habitual instances of silence, pauses, and stutters (Oliver, Serovich & Mason, 2005). He also corrected grammar, as in line with the denaturalisation process, as long as it did not take away from what was meant by the participants' responses.

Furthermore, the researcher conducted **member checking** by paraphrasing what participants said to ensure that the researcher understood what the participants meant, as in accordance with expositions on member checking presented by Carlson (2010) and Curtin and Fossey (2007). Regarding aspects of **reflexivity**, which is defined as intentional self-awareness of the researcher participant relationship on the research process (Oliphant, & Bennet, 2020; Gilgun, 2006), the researcher engaged in instances of reflexive journaling, especially during the transcribing and analysing phases, to ensure that he stayed aware of his own biases (as a conscious attempt to mitigate them). Reflexive journaling is noted by numerous scholars as being useful for becoming more attuned to the opportunities and challenges of the reflexivity process (Oliphant, & Bennet, 2020; Berger, 2015; Probst, & Berenson, 2014; Markham, 2009). Though the researcher felt that applying reflexive journaling aided him in maintaining objectivity (by being aware of his own biases), he feels that if he should have started applying it at an earlier stage in the research process. As, in doing so, he would have been able to attain more insight into personal factors (at an earlier stage), which could have influenced his planning and conceptualisation of the various facets of the study. See annexure four for a complete reflexivity report.

The findings of the research will now be presented in the sections that follow.

Section B

This section serves to present specific characteristics of the participants that were examined during the empirical study.

4.3. Participant Particulars

The following section will describe the individual characteristics of the participants in terms of their length of time as a social worker, the type of organisation that they are working for, the geographical area that they work in, as well as the amount of cases in their caseloads. In providing the individual profiles of the participants, it will help to create an over-arching context of the participants, while also providing insight into the comprehensive contexts of the participants as individuals. This is relevant as, by providing the aforementioned contexts, it can help provide insight into the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in social development, which relates to the identified goal of this research study. The individual profiling of each individual may also be helpful in interpreting the contexts of the narratives and analysis presented in section C.

To be noted is that participant two, as well as participant fifteen indicated a massive amount of cases in their caseload (as seen below). The reason for this is that both participants were the respective heads of their organisations and when asked about the amount of cases in their caseload, they indicated the total amount of caseloads for their entire organisation (not themselves as individuals). As such, the researcher decided to categorise them as part of the group that has 75 or more cases in their caseload.

4.3.1. Individual profiles of participants

Participant Number	Length of time as a social worker (in years)	Type of organisation	Geographical area that services are rendered	Amount of cases in caseload
1	22	NGO	Semi-urban	70
2	28	NGO	Semi-urban	1800
3	33	NGO	Urban	45

4	25	Private	Semi-urban	12
5	1.5	Private	Rural	50
6	1.5	Private	Rural	50
7	15	NGO	Semi-urban	45
8	3	NGO	Urban	50
9	20	NGO	Semi-urban	115
10	3	NGO	Rural	185
11	4	Public	Urban	168
12	5	NGO	Urban	5
13	12	Public	Rural	23
14	11	Private	Urban	80
15	31	Private	Rural	7000
16	3	NGO	Urban	73
17	7	Private	Urban	26
18	1.5	Public	Urban	50

Table 4.3.1. Individual profiles of participants

4.3.2. Length of time as a social worker

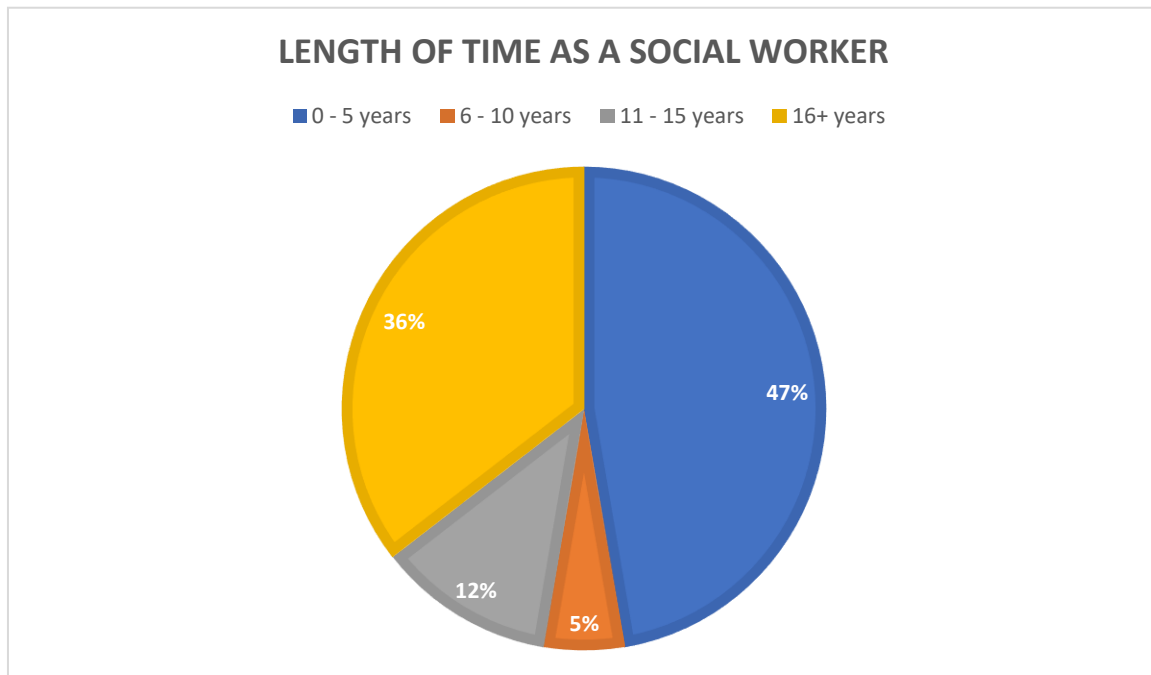


Figure 4.3.2. Length of time as a social worker (N=18)

The figure presented above indicates that social workers who have been working for five years or less, made up the majority of the study. This can be attributed to the fact that the researcher also falls under this category and mainly utilised his professional networks that he built up during his undergraduate studies, as a means to source participants. The second most prevalent group of participants were the participants who have been social workers for 16 years or more, indicating more field experience. Therefore, when considering that the majority of the participants could either be classified as relatively inexperienced (less than five years served as a social worker) or largely experienced (sixteen or more years as a social worker), it indicates that newer social workers might experience a lack of medium-experience social workers (six to fifteen years) to learn from. It also means that there will be a smaller amount of more-experienced (sixteen years or more) social workers in the years to come, if the more-experienced workers retire. Finally, the length of time as a social worker might also impact upon the perceptions of social workers, as newer workers might have a rose-coloured perception of issues surrounding the field, while more-experienced social workers might look at the situations more realistically.

4.3.3. Type of organisation

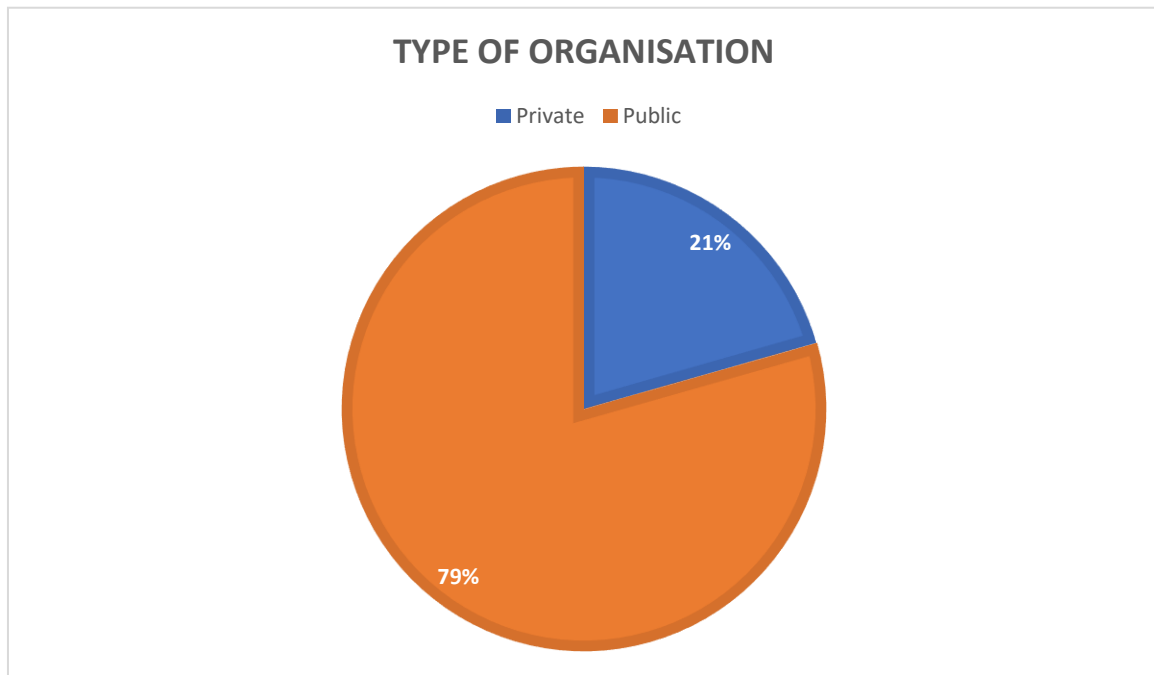


Figure 4.3.3. Type of organisation where participants work at (N=18)

Apparent from the figure provided above is that the majority of the participants work at private organisations. This is significant as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) fall under the private sector and are largely responsible for rendering generic social work services. Since South Africa has a large amount of poverty, generic service delivery automatically includes a focus on poverty alleviation initiatives. Therefore, when considering that the majority of the participants are involved in this sector, it makes their perceptions appropriate to the study as they form part of service delivery demographic that more often work towards poverty alleviation, thus linking with the goal of study that relates to obtaining an understanding of financial literacy education's role and relationship with social development (and thereby, poverty alleviation initiatives).

4.3.4. Geographical area that they practice in

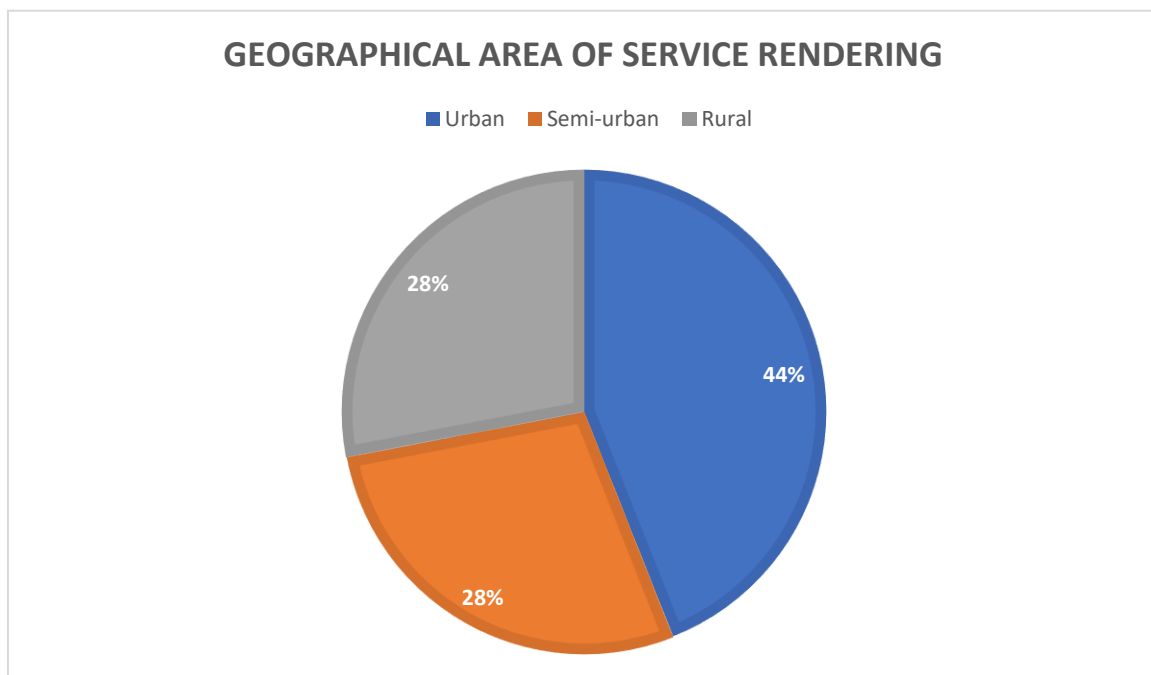


Figure 4.3.4. Geographical area where services are rendered (N=18)

The figure above indicates that the majority of the participants work in urban areas, with an equal amount work in semi-urban and rural areas. According to Daniels et al (2013), this can be significant as disparities in urban- and rural areas often mirror former spatial policies of the apartheid regime. Therefore, if considering that Daniels et al (2013) place emphasis on the significance of urban- and rural contexts, understanding the contexts of the participants practicing in those areas may better help to inform the researcher when evaluating the relationship that financial literacy education has with perceived hindered, or aided instances of poverty alleviation.

4.3.5. Amount of cases in caseload

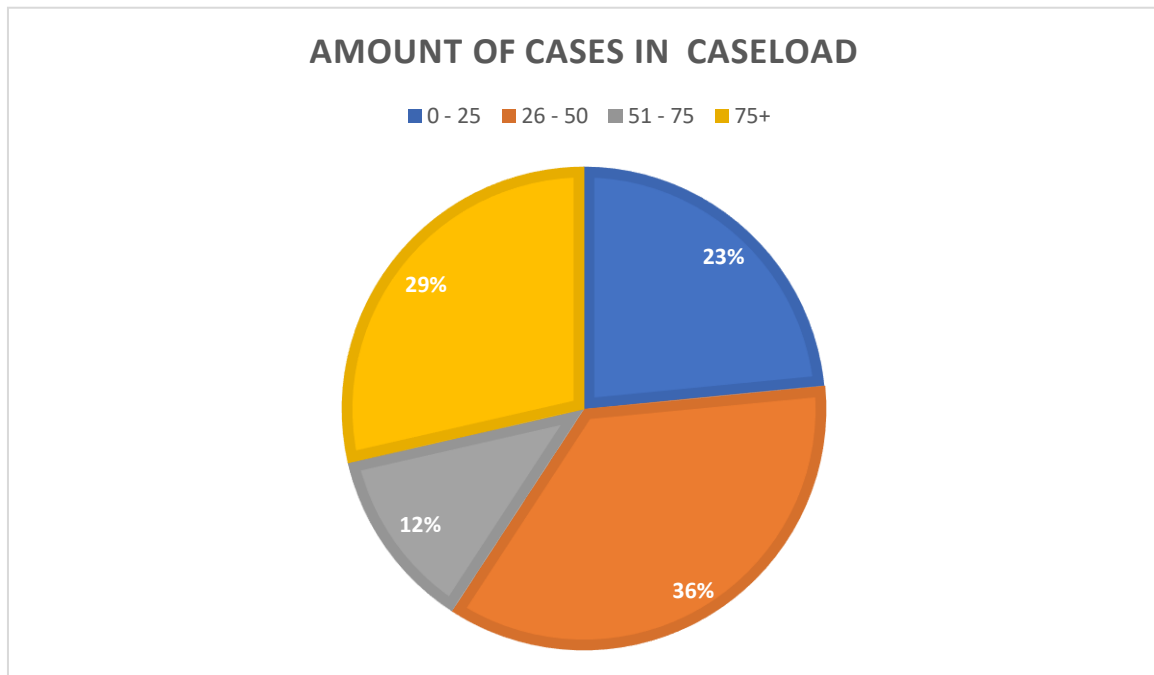


Figure 4.3.5. Amount of cases in the caseloads of participants (N=18)

Apparent from the figure presented above is that the majority of the participants experience high caseloads. Bearing in mind that the number of cases that are most common seem to range from twenty-six to fifty, and more than seventy-five, it indicates that the workload of social workers across the board is very high. When considering that the majority of the participants were either newer social workers, the fact that their caseloads are so extensive, may impact their perceptions negatively as they might feel overwhelmed. Similarly, when considering that the second most prevalent group entails participants that have been social workers for longer periods of time, the fact that their caseloads are so high might also impact negatively on their perceptions as they may feel exhausted or demotivated.

Section C

The section to follow serves to present themes and sub-themes related to the data obtained from the participants of the research study. Narratives will be presented in *italics* for the reader's ease.

4.4. Themes, sub-themes and categories

A total of two themes, with seven sub-themes each, and subsequent categories were identified from the narratives of the participants. The table presented below provides a summary of all the themes, sub-themes, and categories, as identified by the researcher

Themes	Sub-themes	Categories
1. Profile of service users' financial literacy	1.1. Main problems experienced by service users in caseload.	1.1.1. Financial problems 1.1.2. Family disintegration 1.1.3. Mental health concerns
	1.2. Definitions of poverty.	1.2.1. By income level 1.2.2. By inability to provide for basic needs 1.2.3. By mentality adopted
	1.3. Reasons for service users' poverty.	1.3.1. Structural and practical issues 1.3.2. Income 1.3.3. Issues of mentality
	1.4. Reasons for service users' over-indebtedness.	1.4.1. Financial reasons 1.4.2. Structural and practical reasons 1.4.3. Reasons of mentality
	1.5. Reasons for service users' financial illiteracy.	1.5.1. Lack of appropriate education

		<p>1.5.2. Mentality adopted</p> <p>1.5.3. Structural reasons</p>
	<p>1.6. Reasons to educate service users to be more financially literate.</p>	<p>1.6.1. Interpersonal and intrapersonal benefits</p> <p>1.6.2. Financial benefits</p> <p>1.6.3. Cognitive benefits</p>
	<p>1.7. Pertinent aspects of service users' financial literacy education.</p>	<p>1.7.1. Financial aspects</p> <p>1.7.2. Cognitive aspects</p> <p>1.7.3. Practical aspects</p>
<p>2. The role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education</p>	<p>2.1. Interventions utilised when educating service users regarding financial literacy education.</p>	<p>2.1.1. Generic social work intervention</p> <p>2.1.2. Specialized intervention</p> <p>2.1.3. Challenges to intervention</p>
	<p>2.2. Pertinent role-players to be involved in the financial literacy education of service users.</p>	<p>2.2.1. Social workers</p> <p>2.2.2. Business community</p> <p>2.2.3. Government</p>

	2.3. Key factors in the operationalisation of financial literacy endeavours.	2.3.1. Social work 2.3.2. Schools as key factor 2.3.3. Practical considerations
	2.4. Role of social workers regarding financial literacy education of service users.	2.4.1. Facilitator 2.4.2. Agent of empowerment 2.4.3. Enabler
	2.5. Challenges regarding the financial literacy education of service users.	2.5.1. Issues of mentality and behaviour 2.5.2. Logistical issues
	2.6. Boons to aid in the facilitation of financial literacy education of service users.	2.6.1. Social workers skillset 2.6.2. Success stories as a motivating factor
	2.7. Financial literacy education as contributor towards poverty alleviation and social development.	2.7.1. Educational benefits 2.7.2. Cognitive benefits 2.7.3. Societal benefits

Table 4.4. Themes, sub-themes, and categories

The researcher decided to include sub-themes and categories as they can help in outlining a structural framework that can be utilised in aid of the researcher's analytical endeavours. To ensure that a sense of uniformity is maintained throughout the analysis process, the researcher will aim to work in a cyclical pattern – first he will explain what was asked, before offering excerpts of the participants' narratives as examples. This will be done to show how the narratives help support and describe the identified themes and contexts. He will then attempt to analyse the findings by elucidating links which it has in terms of the literature presented throughout the literature review chapters. Should instances occur where themes emerge that the researcher had not deductively prepared for in his literature review, he will apply inductive reasoning by identifying and utilising new literature that the themes can be analysed against. Important to note is that the researcher will underline the core ideas encapsulated in the participants' discourses to provide a graphic depiction of the sub-themes and categories, before explaining the significance that it may have against literature.

Theme 1: Profile of service users' financial literacy

Themes	Sub-themes	Categories
Profile of service users' financial literacy	Main problems experienced by service users in caseload	Financial problems Family disintegration Mental health concerns
	Definitions of poverty	Definition by income level Definition by inability to provide for basic needs Definition by mentality adopted
	Reasons for service users' poverty	Structural and practical issues Income issues Issues of mentality

	Reasons for service users' over-indebtedness	Financial reasons Structural reasons Reasons of mentality
	Reasons for service users' financial illiteracy	Lack of appropriate education Mentality adopted Structural reasons
	Reasons to educate service users to be more financially literate	Interpersonal- and intrapersonal benefits Financial benefits Cognitive benefits
	Aspects related to financial literacy education that service users should be educated in	Financial aspects Cognitive aspects Practical aspects

Table 4.4.1. Theme 1: Profile of service users' financial literacy

4.4.1. Theme 1: Profile of service users' financial literacy

In this section of the interview, the focus was placed on various aspects that would help elucidate the financial literacy profile of service users. The participants were asked to describe the main problems of the service users in their caseload, what indicators were being used when defining service users as monetarily poor, reasons for service user poverty, reasons for service user over-indebtedness, reasons for service user financial illiteracy; their views regarding whether service users should be educated to be more financially literate, and if they should, which aspects would be the most pertinent to teach them. Important to note is that, because the sub-themes all relate to the over-arching theme of the service users' profile of financial literacy, the categories identified by the participants seem to overlap amongst the various sub-themes and categories. This will mean that though many categories will seem to be

similar to one another, their individual significance will become apparent when the researcher will analyse them in terms of their relevant sub-themes' contexts.

4.4.1.1. Main problems experienced by service users in caseload

Though participants indicated a wide array of different problems, three main categories emerged – financial problems, family disintegration, and mental health concerns. Participants indicated that financial problems related to aspects such as poor education levels, a lack of financial knowledge and skills and being reliant on social grants. Participants explained that issues of family disintegration stemmed from aspects such substance abuse, familial conflict, stress-related problems and abuse and neglect, while the category regarding mental health concerns encapsulated aspects such as anxiety and a lack of emotional support.

4.4.1.1.1. Financial problems

When asked to describe the main problems of service users in their caseload, financial problems were identified by the majority of the participants as a key problem. As noted in the paragraph above, most participants framed financial problems in terms of poor education levels, a lack of financial knowledge and skills and being reliant on social grants as a sole source of income. The narratives that will be presented below have been selected as representative examples of the general trend that was observed amongst participants, in terms of financial problems experienced by service users in their caseloads.

Participant 2: "...Due to this we see many children fall behind in school around that grade, with some dropping out completely. This ultimately results in a lack of education that tends to follow them around for their rest of their life and often results in them falling into a self-sustaining cycle of poverty."

Participant 8: "Ever since the Covid-19 pandemic, unemployment has rose significantly. From this we see that some of our service users (who were not reliant on SASSA grants before the pandemic) have chosen to start relying on grants as their income..."

Participant 11: "They often do not have the skills or means to do financial planning..."

The narratives presented above provide the general trend that was observed regarding financial problems as a main challenge to service users in the participants'

caseloads. Thus, if the service users drop out of school it means that they are often unequipped to deal with the various stressors of life. Though Haushofer and Fehr (2014) explain that poverty is characterized not only by insufficient income but a multitude of factors, one cannot deny that achieving financial security can definitely help mitigate the effects of poverty. This is important as, in order to achieve financial security, a key element required is the utilisation of knowledge and skills as application to real-world financial problems. And if service users lack the knowledge and skills required, there will be no way that they can apply it.

As indicated in the narratives above, there are some service users that are dependent, or have started recently being dependent on social grants as their main form of income. Though there has been an increase in the amount that grants pay out each month (Mboweni, 2020), the maximum amount receivable is still only R1860,00 per month, raising the question how far that money can be stretched if the recipients lack the knowledge and skills to manage it properly. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) argued that social grant spending is an investment in human capital that underpins future inclusive growth (HSRC, 2013). The value of this is that it provides people living in poverty with a buffer against falling behind and being unable to participate in the mainstream economy (HSRC, 2013). Interestingly, Mago and Hofisi (2012) posit that continual aid is not sustainable as it contains a one-directional flow of resources, which lacks replenishment, making it unproductive. It is undeniable however, that social grants do provide some hope to destitute people during trying times, but it begs the question of sustainability. If there is no financial empowerment alongside the receiving of grants, it may contribute to a sense of dependency on the assistance provided, rather than empowering people to look after themselves (Mago & Hofisi, 2012).

The final aspect to be considered under the category of financial problems, is the lack of financial knowledge and skills. As explained in previous chapters, a chief concern that is often coupled with a lack of financial knowledge and skills, is that of debt traps. If service users get trapped in a cycle of debt, it may exacerbate the already-experienced effects of poverty. In order to combat the lack of knowledge and skills, programs such as the Adult Basic Education Training (*ABET*) can be looked at as a potential antecedent. Engelbrecht and Ornellas (2019) provide insight as to which themes would be pertinent when equipping service users with financial knowledge and

skills via the facilitation of programmes such as *ABET*, namely, financial values, basic banking, financial planning and budgeting, relevance and options for saving, credit and debt management, and asset-building and home ownership. Thus, if service users are to be financially empowered through the exploration and adoption of the aforementioned themes, programmes such as *ABET* may be a pertinent point of departure.

4.4.1.1.2 Family disintegration

Family disintegration was identified as the second-most common problem when asking participants about the main problems experienced by service users in their caseload. More specifically, the participants indicated that family disintegration mainly stemmed from factors such as substance abuse, familial conflict, stress-related issues, and issues of abuse and neglect.

Participant 1: “Substance abuse is a major issue. When people are addicted to substances, they often spend the little money that they have on substances, rather than providing for the needs of their families. “

Participant 13: “In many of the families we serve that are poor, similar trends (in terms of problems) usually arise. One of the most common of these problems is domestic violence...”

Participant 15: “Family disintegration occurs in a variety of ways. As the service users are struggling financially, the lack of finances often results in other stress-related problems forming as well.”

In the narratives presented above, key challenges in regard to the aspect of family disintegration were provided. Participant one’s narrative provides insight regarding a trend that was prevalent throughout the empirical study – factors that impact upon service users’ mentality in terms of reasoning and ability to prioritize. According to Cho and Kogan (2016), vulnerability to drug abuse is a developmental process that underlines the influence [on development] of challenging childhood environments. If one then considers that the context of the study regards service users experiencing poverty, a potential link between the socio-economic circumstances associated with poverty and substance abuse becomes apparent.

Though familial conflict as a term is very broad and needs to be fitted accordingly to the context of the study, domestic violence was the most prevalent example of familial

conflict provided. Goodman, Pugach, Skolnik, and Smith (2013) state that ongoing exposure to stressful and threatening environments has been linked to negative affective responses such as hostility, anger, and hopelessness, which can help explain why domestic violence is often seen in poorer families. Issues of familial conflict need to be addressed as family systems can easily become a risk factor for other socio-economic problems, if they function inadequately for prolonged periods of time (Cho & Kogan, 2016).

Stress-related problems are any problems that arise when individuals experiencing stressful circumstances and are unable to effectively cope. Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that there are a multitude of chronic and acute stressors that face people living in poverty (Goodman, *et al*, 2013), making stress-related concerns a recurring reality for many poor service users. It is therefore imperative that when poverty alleviation measures are considered, service users are consulted in terms of the purpose and goal of the proposed programs. This will help ensure that the intervention can be specifically tailored to the needs of the service users.

4.4.1.1.3. Mental health concerns

The third and final category that was identified regarding the main problems of the service users pertains to mental health concerns. Participants indicated that issues of anxiety and a lack of emotional support were the most common.

Participant 14: "I often find in my service users, especially the younger ones, that they tend to struggle with anxiety."

Participant 18: "One of the main problems that we have identified as prevalent in my service users, is a lack of emotional support. We especially encounter cases like these in situations where the family structure may be dysfunctional or absent."

Though mental health concerns and poverty are not always discussed in the same breath, there have been a multitude of studies conducted that focus on this relationship (Goodman *et al*, 2013; Hanandita, & Tampubolon, 2014; Fitzsimmons, Goodman, Kelly, & Smith, 2017). Some of the key findings presented by these studies are that poverty is strongly associated with a range of mental health difficulties (Goodman, *et al*, 2013), the effect of poverty on mental health is approximately five times stronger than conventionally estimated (Hanandita, & Tampubolon, 2014), and the experiences of the various dimensions of poverty have significant effects in being associated with

poorer childhood mental health (Fitzsimmons, *et al*, 2017). By considering the results of the studies presented above, it becomes clear that poor socio-economic circumstances do impact upon mental health. It is therefore imperative to consider aspects of mental health when considering how to approach poverty alleviation efforts.

4.4.1.2. Definitions of poverty

The second sub-theme of this section regards which indicators participants utilised when categorising service users as poor. The main categories that arose include: definition by service user income level, definition by the inability to provide for their (service users) basic needs, and definition by mentality adopted.

4.4.1.2.1. Definition by Income level

The decision to categorise service users based on their income level, presented two main indicators – expenses exceeding income, and low- or lack of income due to the unemployment as seen from the narratives presented below.

Participant 3: “Even before Covid, unemployment figures were high. After the pandemic hit, many of my service users who were once employed lost their jobs...”

Participant 9: “I have noticed that poverty is often experienced (by service users) as a lack of income, rather than no income. An example of this would be in cases where the service users work for minimum wage. In multiple sessions, there has been explained to me that the families are struggling - not because the family does not earn, but because their expenses significantly outweigh their income.”

The most prevalent category that emerged regarding the sub-theme related to definitions of poverty, is a definition based on income level. This outlook mirrors aspects of indices’ such as Human Development Index (HDI) (United Nations, 2010) and the Mutli-Dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) (Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, 2020) as it considers monetary forces to be a prime indicator in issues of poverty. Since poverty is a complex, multi-faceted socio-economic problem, adopting only an income-focused perspective is problematic as it neglects to consider other forces that may impact upon the service user’s experienced reality of poverty (Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, 2020). However, since money is necessary for service users to sustain themselves and their families, in instances where service users lack the financial means to provide and survive, the effects of poverty may be experienced more dramatically.

4.4.1.2.2. Definition by the inability to provide for basic needs

The second most prevalent indicator that was identified entailed a definition of poverty based on an inability to provide for basic needs. Though this category could technically be incorporated in the previous indicator, what made it stand alone was the fact that the participants indicated the inability to provide in their own (or their families') needs stemmed from a structural problem's perspective, rather than being purely financially conceptualised. The narratives below provide insight into the aforementioned perspective by considering issues of substance addiction and homelessness.

Participant 4: "Homelessness is a big challenge for us because service users that have nothing often can't fulfil their own basic needs. This means that before any sustainable change can occur, that person needs to be able to stand on its own two feet. And to achieve this has proven to be especially difficult due to a multitude of reasons. Remnants of the apartheid past is still visible – the homeless service users often come from disadvantaged backgrounds and often have poor- or no education."

Participant 7: "Many of the service users we serve are or have been on the street. In most cases we have seen that substance abuse is a factor coupled with issues of homelessness. And I think, you know, that a large reason for it (substance abuse and homeless) arises from our skewed apartheid past. It would be naïve to think that it is not the case..."

Though much progress has been made in the 26 years since apartheid ended, it would be naïve to think that all inequalities of the past could be fully addressed in such a short time. Section 27(b) of the White Paper for Social Welfare stipulates that poverty coincides with gender, geographical, and spatial determinants (Republic of South Africa, 1997) and this still rings true today as echoed by the narratives provided above. Studies conducted by Finfgeld-Connett, Bloom, and Johnson (2012) stipulate that distorted perceptions of competency, which are shaped by dysfunctional relationships and mental health problems make it difficult for [individuals] struggling with substance abuse to resolve homelessness. This is important to note as it highlights a potential link in relationship between the effects of apartheid experienced by substance addicted and homeless service users, and reasons of increased difficulty in attaining sustainable change. Therefore, in order to achieve sustainable change, the service users would need a holistic intervention that considers all the factors stipulated by

Finfgeld-Connett *et al* (2012) and is focused around financially, and emotionally empowering the service users through education. Should this be achieved, service users will be in a position where they can provide in their own (and their families') needs more successfully and responsibly.

4.4.1.2.3 Definition by mentality adopted

The third and final category that was identified regarding the sub-theme of the definition of poverty, is definition by mentality adopted. The narratives provided below provide insight into the main two determinants – the mentality of “living from hand to mouth” and “black tax”.

Participant 5: “They (the service users) live from hand to mouth. When they receive their money, they spend it all on goods for the week or month that lies ahead. This means that there are no conditions to promote saving behaviour present, as their money is gone soon after they receive it. It is a lack of future planning, as well as the means to do future planning. They are just living for today or this week or this month.”

Participant 12: “So suppose I am the only child in the family that is working. Then every time I get paid, family members will ask me for money because according to tradition they see it as my duty to give them money. Even though they may not know how much I make. This results in my money being gone soon after I receive it, leaving me back where I started. This is the concept of black tax.”

The narratives presented above elucidate two interesting mindsets often experienced by service users. The mentality of “living hand to mouth” is characterised by a lack of future planning, as well as the lack of the means to do future planning. This is usually as the amount that service users receive (that have this mentality) is often just enough to see them through the week or month. This indicates a direct link to the theme of *financial planning and budgeting*, as described by Engelbrecht and Ornellas (2019:1241) as “figuring out expenses, developing a basic line-item budget, how to do day-to-day, medium-, and long-term financial planning.” This indicates a need for service users that adopt the mentality of “living hand-to-mouth” to be educated in terms of financial literacy to ensure that they have the opportunity to improve their financial standing.

Ratlebjane (2015) describes *black tax* as “extra money that black professionals are coughing up every month to support their extended families.” Mangoma and Wilson-

Prangley (2019) provide further insight into this concept by stating that it is often experienced as a pressure to care financially for people in broad family or kin networks, while at the same time trying to build sustainable wealth for oneself. From these expositions, one can determine that *black tax* can be a burden on service users who are trying to establish or grow their capital base. In issues of cultural factors, service users should be allowed to determine their own needs regarding phenomena such as *black tax*. The role of social work can be however to help empower the service users financially. By equipping them with financial knowledge and skills, one can help ensure that service users' financial growth and sustainability due to the mitigation of factors that may impair or hinder their ability to save and invest (Planting, 2013).

4.4.1.3 Reasons for service users' poverty

The third sub-theme relating to the theme of the profile of service users' financial literacy regards perceived reasons for the service users' poverty. The participants were asked what they thought were some of the main causes of monetary poverty in their service users. The categories that emerged are structural and practical issues, issues related to income and issues of mentality.

4.4.1.3.1. Structural and practical issues

The category that was the most recurring, regards structural and practical issues experienced by service users. Participants indicated that structural issues pertained to a lack of access to resources and opportunities, generational poverty and practical aspects such as being an unregistered citizen.

Participant 2: "It actually is a structural problem because education falls under that. If I compare the education that happens in our township schools to the education that happens in more urban settings, there is a huge difference in the quality of education."

Participant 3: "What we find in lots of the parents is that they do not have birth certificates or identity documents for themselves or their children. This means that they cannot get a job and cannot even apply for a social assistance grant because they lack the proper documents."

Participant 14: "...generational poverty, I think. As in many people did not receive the opportunity to receive an education during apartheid. And it is still showing now."

Apparent from the narratives provided above is the fact that education can be tied into the structural and practical issues as a key aspect. When considering the role that education plays in relation to phenomena such as lack of access to resources and opportunities and generational poverty, it is important to be conscious of the reasons for these phenomena. According to the latest living conditions survey (Statistics South Africa, 2015) structural inequality still persists throughout the country as black- and coloured-headed households still experience greater disparity on average. This points to a great need for education amongst previously disadvantaged demographics. By adopting a capabilities approach to this challenge, it can help the service users attain freedom of opportunity (Banerjee, 2015) if education can be facilitated to them. With education also comes access to more opportunities as a form of education is often required to effectively engage with the job market. Providing previously disadvantaged service users with an education can also help them realise the importance of registering themselves and their children, as it can further open avenues that they can access for support.

4.4.1.3.2. Income issues

Just behind structural and practical reasons for poverty, issues of income in service users was identified as the second-most pressing category. Here, participants identified a lack of financial knowledge and skills, problems with debt, and unemployment as the major contributors.

Participant 6: “Many service users that are unemployed seem to be reliant on the assistance of social grants as a primary form of income. While the grants offer some sort of financial relief, it is often not enough to see them through the month. Couple that with a lack of financial knowledge and skills and you have a recipe for potential debt disaster.”

Participant 15: “Debt is a concern amongst many of our service users. Due to a lack of “financial know-how” it often results in financial mismanagement. This is especially dangerous in situations where service users’ expenses are greater than their income, as they then need to step into debt, often just to survive.”

Participant 17: “The lack of a financial education often means that service users are more vulnerable to debt traps and getting stuck in debt. This is often a slippery slope

where they fall deeper and deeper into debts, the more their expenses become, while their income stays the same.”

The narratives presented above outline a potentially harmful relationship between a lack of financial knowledge and skills and getting stuck in debt traps. It is apparent that survival debt, which is the inability to obtain basic commodities that are seen as integral for survival (Engelbrecht & Ornellas, 2019; Engelbrecht, 2009), seems to be a large driving-force for service users to engage in debt. Therefore, if education in the form of financial knowledge and skills (for e.g. budgeting monthly expenses versus income), can be learnt and applied by service users, it creates the potential for financial education to act as an antecedent to problems related to debt. It has to be noted however, that financial knowledge and skills need to be coupled with a means to increase service user capital for sustainable progress to be attained.

4.4.1.3.3. Issues of mentality

The final category to be discussed regards issues of mentality. The participants indicated that this category often involves the way that service users view and apply their views to their surroundings. The most important aspects that pertain to this category were identified by the participants as being a sense of learned helplessness, and a lack of discipline regarding spending.

Participant 4: “Often we find in situations where service users are really poor (either being reliant on grants, or they have no to little income) that they have adopted a mentality that views their problems as the problems of the social worker, or the government. There is a lack of responsibility for their own circumstances...”

Participant 12: “I think a big issue is that service users are not disciplined with their money. If they receive their payment on a Friday, all their money will be gone by Monday.”

Participant 16: “In many situations where my service users are reliant on social grants or are unemployed, I have noticed them often adopting an attitude of being helpless. They view their income as the problem of the government (as they are reliant on grants) and in many instances, refuse to take responsibility for their situations.”

As social workers, challenges related to mindsets of service users must be viewed, accepted and understood in terms of the unique contexts of service users. For example, according to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1954), if a person has

not satisfied their basic survival needs (for e.g. like food), they will not be able to consider other needs (such as the need to take responsibility for their own situation in this case). Therefore, regarding issues of mentality, an approach needs to be utilised that helps enable service users to provide for their needs, one aspect at a time.

A further recommendation regards the issue of 'learned helplessness' as identified by the participants. According to Nuvvula (2016), helplessness is a state in which nothing a person opts to do affects what is happening. It is the quitting or the give up response that follows the conviction that whatever a person does not matter and can thus be viewed as the action of not taking ownership of one's situation. Therefore, learned helplessness refers to the learned response that service users may display when confronted with circumstances where they may feel that nothing they do matters. If adopting a mentality of learned helplessness, service users can then be viewed as placing the responsibility for the provision of their own needs into the hands of an exterior party (for e.g. relying on the grant money provided by SASSA). A major concern with phenomena such as learned helplessness, is that it can produce and reinforce negative behavioural and lifestyle patterns in service users, which could further exacerbate the challenges they experience. Negative behavioural and lifestyle patterns can also act as a hindrance to effective service delivery by impacting service user motivation. It is therefore imperative that issues that contribute to negative behavioural and lifestyle patterns, be addressed in tandem with financial issues if true social development wants to be achieved.

Another crucial aspect to discuss is the seeming lack of financial knowledge and skills. In the narrative presented by participant twelve, an example is given where service users spend all their money in the first weekend that they receive it. This points to a lack of understanding regarding the importance of future planning and building savings, which are some key themes of financial literacy (Engelbrecht & Ornellas, 2019; Engelbrecht, 2009). Therefore, if financial literacy education can be facilitated as a potential answer to the aforementioned issues of mentality, various challenges may be able to be addressed in one, holistic form of intervention.

4.4.1.4. Reasons for service users' over-indebtedness

The fourth sub-theme that was identified from the interviews with the participants regards reasons for the service users' over-indebtedness. Participants were asked what they thought were integral factors regarding aspects that may lead to service users being over-indebted. Participants identified financial reasons, structural and practical reasons, and reasons of mentality as the main categories.

4.4.1.4.1. Financial reasons

The most prevalent category that arose regarding the sub-theme of service user indebtedness, related to financial reasons for debt. The participants indicated that financial mismanagement due to a lack of financial knowledge and skills and borrowing money to pay off debt were the prime indicators in this category.

Participant 9: "I think ultimately that they struggle to understand financial concepts such interest rates for example. It seems that they fail to comprehend the consequences of debt and how it works. This lack of understanding is often coupled with an inability to effectively manage their money."

Participant 11: "When I conduct individual sessions with service users, sometimes the topic turns to finances. Those that indicate to me that they are in financial trouble, usually also indicate that they are struggling with paying back debt. When asked why they were indebted they often explained that their expenses were more than their income, meaning they had to borrow money to pay off debt."

Participant 17: "Cashflow problems is quite prevalent. These sorts of problems are usually tied to having no or a low income. However, there are some of my service users that technically earn enough (as far as I am aware) to cover their weekly or monthly expenses. If they experience issues of cashflow as well, it could point to a lack of financial management skills, such as budgeting, as a reason for the problem."

A lack of financial knowledge and skills can be viewed as a form of cognitive debt (Engelbrecht & Ornellas, 2019; Engelbrecht, 2009). Equipping service users with appropriate financial knowledge and skills can be a powerful tool for helping service users systematically relieve themselves from debt. This mindset directly relates to one of the key themes of financial literacy education in the form of credit and debt management. Engelbrecht and Ornellas (2019) explain that credit and debt management regards aspects such as understanding credit, the importance of paying

bills on time, how consumer loans work, how to recover from bad credit, and how to avoid ongoing indebtedness. All these aspects can be useful in situations such as described by the narratives presented above. To be noted, is that social workers can only earnestly help service users struggling with financial issues, if they equip themselves with the appropriate financial knowledge and skills. Studies have shown however, in terms of financial social work, that practitioners themselves often have limited financial knowledge (Birkenmeier, Callahan, Sherraden, McClendon, & Huang, 2020; Despard & Chowa, 2012; Loke, Watts, & Kakoti, 2013), indicating the importance of service providers also needing to be educated, to avoid “the blind leading the blind.”.

4.4.1.4.2. Structural reasons

Structural and practical reasons for service user over-indebtedness was identified as the second most prevalent category. In this case, structural and practical reasons refer to reasons that are tied into structural systems that the service users need to engage with. In this category, the participants identified poor socio-economic circumstances, coupled with poor interpersonal support and role-models, and generational dysfunctional patterns due to an apartheid legacy as the main structural reasons.

Participant 3: “The socio-economic circumstances that they (the service users) live in is often dire. These circumstances can take the form of (for example) not having enough money to buy food, not having proper housing or water or electricity etc. The poor living conditions coupled with irresponsible economic behaviour (due to a lack of access to education) often leads to more severe problems. We also see in many of our youth that living in areas as I just described, that they often adopt or mimic the negative behaviour patterns that they learn from their environment, further indicating a lack of positive role-models for interpersonal support.”

Participant 5: “These negative behaviour patterns can take various forms such as financial mismanagement or domestic violence, but we have found that many of these patterns stem from the country’s history of apartheid. This is as many service users that have families of their own currently may not have been able to receive an education. If the parents are uneducated and mismanage their resources, they set a wrong example for the children to follow. We often also see that the children tend to adopt the parents’ behaviour patterns as they age.

Generational dysfunctional patterns are behavioural patterns that are inherently negative. An example of this would be making a habit out of borrowing money to pay off debt or buying groceries. When considering the example provided above, the need for effective social developmental strategies become clear. Midgley (1995) and Gray (2006) are authors who argue that the most efficient way to approach social development strategies is by stimulating both, human- and economic development. In the case presented above, human development can take the form of educating service users regarding their dysfunctional patterns, while economic development can take the form of a structured application of a financial literacy initiative to systematically change the dysfunctional pattern.

Regarding poor interpersonal support and role-models, Hanandita and Tampubulon (2014) argue that consensus among epidemiologists seems to suggest that the social causation hypothesis (wealth/health) is more plausible for explaining high-prevalence mental disorders such as depression and anxiety disorders. If then, researchers agree that there is a correlation between experiences of poverty (like the poor socio-economic circumstances mentioned above) and mental disorders like anxiety, it can provide insight as to why there might be a lack of interpersonal support and positive role-models as the majority of the service users experiencing poor socio-economic circumstances might be effected by mental disorders, making them less likely to be able to sufficiently support each other interpersonally.

4.4.1.4.3. Reasons of mentality

The third and final category to arise from the sub-theme related to the service users' over-indebtedness regards reasons related to the mentality adopted by the service users. Participants indicated that these reasons pertain to a lack of future planning and prioritisation, as well as the inability to understand why prioritisation is important.

Participant 7: "There is definitely a lack of budgeting skills. Also, a huge lack of prioritisation. I think it goes even beyond that though, because many of the service users don't understand why prioritisation is important."

Participant 8: "They (the service users) struggle to differentiate between wants and needs. And because they struggle it leads to uninformed financial decisions being made. An example of this is such as opening a credit account at Edgars without being

able to afford it because they really want a top (dress). But then they don't realise that they can't actually afford it because they don't understand financial concepts."

Participant 14: "...they don't understand that if you buy (for example) a TV on credit, it is going to be more expensive because of all the instalments. They just reason that they worked hard and want the TV, so they go and buy it without a second thought. This behaviour can also lead to regular uninformed spending patterns which can be detrimental to their financial health as service users."

A lack of future planning and prioritisation can be regarded as indicators that point to the service users being financially illiterate. This is stated as the information provided by the narratives above can be directly linked to the themes of financial values and financial planning and budgeting (Engelbrecht & Ornellas, 2019; Engelbrecht, 2009). The service users' financial illiteracy is further echoed by Theodora and Marti'ah (2016) who explain that consumers with a low level of financial literacy tend to purchase goods they want, instead of what they need. Therefore, economic behaviour as described in the narratives above can be viewed as a potential risk factor to pitfalls of debt, indicating the need for appropriate, timely financial interventions to help service users systematically turn their finances around and break the cycle of poverty.

4.4.1.5. Reasons for service users' illiteracy

The fifth sub-theme that emerged regards perceived reasons why service users may be financial illiterate. The participants identified a lack of appropriate education, reasons of mentality, and structural reasons as the main categories related to this sub-theme.

4.4.1.5.1. Lack of appropriate education

Indicators stemming from a lack of an appropriate education was identified as the most crucial category. A lack of financial knowledge and skills mobilised through uninformed financial decision making was identified as an imperative factor when considering reasons for service user illiteracy levels.

Participant 1: "...because many service users are unequipped regarding financial knowledge, irresponsible financial decision making often increases the stressors they experience because of poverty."

Participant 6: “The lack of education is a big challenge in families who live in poorer socio-economic circumstances. One of the reasons for this that we have identified through our financial trainings, is that people are unequipped in terms of financial knowledge and skills, which often results in reckless financial behaviour, which often exacerbates the challenges they already experience.”

Participant 18: “I think it’s crucial to try and equip the youth with financial knowledge and skills, as many of our families that desperately need financial assistance are also the families where the parents lack the knowledge and skills to pass on to the children. This can be dangerous as uninformed spending can teach the youth the wrong financial behaviour patterns...”

Apparent from the narratives provided above is the fact that all accounts presented highlight the perceived relationship between irresponsible or uninformed financial behaviour patterns and an increased experience of socio-economic stressors. Since poverty is often experienced as a multitude of socio-economic stressors impacting on the physical and emotional state of service users, it is imperative to ensure that service users experiencing poverty be appropriately equipped with financial knowledge and skills to ensure that they do not perpetuate their own poverty. This sentiment is echoed by Klapper, Lusardi, and van Oudheusden (2014) who argue that poor and less educated service users are more likely to suffer from gaps in financial knowledge, highlighting the imperative need to equip them with previously mentioned knowledge and skills as without it, it will be much harder to empower them to systematically lift themselves out of poverty.

4.4.1.5.2. Mentality adopted by service users

The second category that surfaced in the analysis of the data related to the sub-theme of reasons for service user financial illiteracy, regards the mentality adopted by the service users who are experiencing poverty. Participants identified a lack of communication regarding finances and a lack of future planning which could perpetuate dysfunctional financial behavioural patterns, as salient aspects.

Participant 6: “Finances are generally not something that service users always feel comfortable talking about. It seems there is a perceived stigma from their side due to the fact that they know they struggle financially (and perhaps are embarrassed). A mindset shift needs to happen regarding the communication around finances, because

breaking that stigma can be empowering to service users and can help them to break free from dysfunctional financial behavioural patterns.”

Participant 14: “I think in many families there is a lack of communication in terms of family finances. If there is a lack it can be dangerous to the family as a unit, as well as the individual members’ financial behaviour patterns. For e.g. if the parents decide to buy a new couch (that they technically cannot afford) it takes away from their ability to provide in the more pressing needs of the family (like survival needs). It also communicates dysfunctional spending as being fine to the children, potentially setting them up to engage in the same irresponsible financial behaviour.”

Participant 16: “The mentality of living day-to-day or week-to-week can be harmful to the service users’ physical and emotional state, because it prohibits the service users from systematically building up capital that could be used to improve their socio-economic circumstances. If service users want to uplift themselves economically, future planning as a concept is crucial to understand and apply.”

When considering the responses of the participants provided above, it seems that educating service users in terms of financial knowledge and skills, also would encapsulate stimulating interpersonal skills of communication. Understandably, if service users lack financial knowledge, they might be unable to understand why certain financial behaviours are detrimental, and why certain concepts are imperative to apply. Communication between social workers and service users, as well as between the family members might aid in the pursuit of equipping service users with financial knowledge. As mentioned above, one needs to be aware of and understand the effect that living in poverty can have on service users’ mental states. A study by Hanandita and Tampubolon (2014) found that a higher per capita household expenditure is negatively correlated to symptoms of mental illness. When coupling the aforementioned results with the results of a study conducted by Zhu (2018), which indicated that material hardship was negatively correlated with adolescents’ financial behaviour, it is clear that spending behaviour amongst families can be viewed as a crucial buffer against poor socio-economic circumstances when coupled with increased financial empowerment.

4.4.1.5.3. Structural reasons

The third and final category that emerged pertains to aspects of structural reasons. Participants identified that aspects such as a lack of access to resources, as well as a lack of access to platforms to obtain information from (regarding resources) were main structural reasons for service user illiteracy.

Participant 4: “Many service users who desperately need access to resources often don’t have the means to attain them. This is often due to things like them living far away from resources (in more rural cases) or them not having the means to get to the resources (if they do not have transport or money for a taxi).”

Participant 10: “In many of our older service users, there is a large technological gap. They often do not own products such as cell phones and many are also unaware how ATM’s work. This technological challenge results in them not being able to engage with platforms of information, meaning that they systematically fall further and further behind the technological curve that is becoming ever more necessary to understand to access resources.”

Participant 13: “In more hard-to-reach areas of service delivery (such as the more rural areas), there is often a lack of infrastructure presented as well. This means that service users need to travel far to be able to engage with resources. The travel can often be problematic on its own as many service users living in poverty do not have the means to travel.”

Without access to mainstream financial resources, informed financial decision making can be difficult. This is due to the fact that the world is systematically becoming more digital, and this applies to financial spheres as well. The lack of economic infrastructure in more rural settings (where poverty is often rife) can also be viewed as stemming from the spatial policies instigated under the apartheid regime (Daniels, Partridge, Kekana & Musundwa, 2013). However, since the world is systematically digitising, the role of technology can be explored as a potential medium for economic empowerment in areas where economic infrastructure seems scarce. Way (2014) argued for the application of technology as an important element in financial literacy education intervention. Ultimately, if technology can be incorporated in financial literacy intervention, not only does the potential exist to lift themselves from dire socio-economic circumstances, but via the utilisation of technology as supporting medium,

the need for immediate structural resources can be mitigated as service users will be able to access economic resources from any location. Realistically however, incorporating technology may be challenging as it can be expensive, and an understanding of financial literacy and its concepts would be required to effectively utilise the digital systems (meaning that financial- and technological illiteracy would need to be addressed at the same time).

4.4.1.6. Reasons to educate service users to be more financially literate

In this section the participants were asked whether they thought service users should be educated to be more financially literate. All the participants agreed that they should and identified that the main reasons were that it could bring about interpersonal- and intrapersonal benefits, financial benefits and cognitive benefits.

4.4.1.6.1. Interpersonal- and intrapersonal benefits.

In terms of the category of interpersonal- and intrapersonal benefits, there was identified that aspects pertaining to helping to strengthen the family system can lead to better financial decision making which can help combat the effects of poverty

Participant 2: "I think it is crucial that parents and role-model figures of the youth set an example. Parental figures with increased financial knowledge and skills can help to transfer responsible economic behavioural patterns to the youth (and their spouses). If all family members can learn to adopt positive financial behavioural patterns, it can help to strengthen the family system as family members can learn from one another and keep each other accountable (which should directly correlate with improved financial standing)."

Participant 7: "In cases where we have managed to provide financial literacy education to the whole family system, there has definitely been an increase in economic standing. Obviously, massive and sustainable change takes time, but it has been encouraging to see that the family system can be strengthened through the strengthening of aspects of financial literacy."

Participant 9: "The effects of poverty can definitely be combatted if the whole family can be equipped with financial knowledge and skills. If the family can learn to apply what they learnt, it can result in them having more disposable income, while ensuring that their savings grow. This can lead to an increased sense of economic standing,

which can strengthen the relationships between family members if there are less stressors surrounding finances.”

Research has shown that there is a positive correlation between experiences of poor socio-economic circumstances and experienced symptoms of mental health diseases (Goodman *et al*, 2013; Hanandita & Tampubolon, 2014; Fitzsimons *et al*, 2017; Zhu, 2018). Therefore, if service users can be empowered to relieve themselves of poor socio-economic circumstances, it can act as a potential buffer against symptoms of mental health disease. From the narratives presented above, the relationship between positive financial behavioural patterns and a potentially strengthened family system is elucidated. To be noted, is that there are various factors that impact upon the strength of the family system. It would be naïve to think that strengthening the family’s economic standing as a sole measure would be sufficient in addressing the service users’ needs. As poverty is multi-layered, an economic approach to intervention, should be coupled with other interpersonal- and intrapersonal strategies to ensure that poverty is tackled from a holistic strategy.

4.4.1.6.2. Financial benefits

The second category to emerge regards potential financial benefits that could be experienced by the service users. Participants identified that avoiding debt, and increased savings could result in lessened financial pressure, which in turn could be translated into financial empowerment.

Participant 8: “A problem that arises if service users’ do not save, is that they never have financial security. No savings also means that, if unexpected emergencies occur, it can increase the stress experienced as they have no money put away to draw from (to resolve the emergencies).”

Participant 15: “A major benefit to being financially literate is that it enables one to better approach and navigate situations of debt. If service users are able to understand the consequences of debt and navigate it smarter, it will result in a large stress coming off their shoulders.”

Debt can be crippling to service users who do not understand its consequences or how to navigate it. This phenomenon, as also described by participant fifteen above, regards a type of debt known as cognitive debt. Cognitive debt can be described as a lack of understanding of financial [concepts] and behaviour (Engelbrecht & Ornellas,

2019; Engelbrecht, 2009). Through financial literacy education, service users can be assisted in stepping free from their cognitive debt, which can enable them to practice more responsible economic behaviour (as they will have a better grasp of aspects necessary to engage in and navigate financial environments). Should service users be rid of their cognitive debt, it can help them to engage more effectively with other themes of financial literacy education such as relevance and options for saving (Engelbrecht & Ornellas, 2019; Engelbrecht, 2009). In doing so, service users can help ensure successful dealings with financial institutions to access benefits such as an increased generation of savings over time. If financial literacy education can be utilised in this regard, it will also actively help in addressing one of the key challenges as identified by the National Development Plan in the form of low savings (Republic of South Africa, 2012), indicating the usefulness for the economy as a whole.

4.4.1.6.3. Cognitive benefits

The third and final category that was identified by participants pertained to the experience of cognitive benefits by service users who become financially literate. These cognitive benefits entail service users attaining a sense of financial achievement, security, and empowerment that can assist them in breaking negative financial behavioural patterns, while establishing positive financial behavioural patterns.

Participant 3: "If service users can be assisted in understanding why certain spending or lifestyle patterns are harmful and not sustainable, they might be in a better position to take control of their circumstances."

Participant 13: "...so should they (service users) be able to apply the skills and knowledge that they learnt; they might realise that financial literacy can actually help them. If they see how their savings grow or their debt lessens, it can be a valuable, encouraging financial experience that might provide them with a sense of financial achievement. If they notice that they can feel in control of financial situations, it might encourage them to continue to engage with positive financial behavioural patterns."

Financial achievement and security can be foreign concepts to service users who are stuck in poor socio-economic circumstances. If service users can be empowered to take control of their financial situations (via the vehicle of financial literacy), it can definitely result in them feeling a sense of financial achievement and security. This, in

turn, can lead to an increased sense of “functioning” and “capability” as described by the capabilities approach (Sen, 1979; Hick, 2014; Banerjee, 2015) that will enable them to systematically take more and more control over their circumstances. This is especially important as *financialization*, which entails the growing influence of finance on individuals’ functionings and well-being (Aalbers, 2019), is a growing phenomenon. Furthermore, because financial capability has a larger role in overall well-being today (Sherraden, Lough, Sherraden, Williams-Shanks, & Huang, 2019) it is imperative that service users be assisted in taking control over their financial circumstances.

4.4.1.7. Aspects that service users should be educated in

The final sub-theme that relates to the profile of service users’ financial literacy regards aspects that the participants identified as being key aspects that service users would be needed to be educated in. From the interviews, there was determined that the main categories that arose from this sub-theme were financial aspects, cognitive aspects, and practical aspects.

4.4.1.7.1. Financial aspects

Financial aspects were identified as the most prevalent category to emerge from this sub-theme. Participants indicated that financial knowledge and skills were of utmost importance for service users to learn. There was especial emphasis placed on aspects such as learning how to budget and learning how to save.

Participant 6: “A good place to start would be the basics of finance – budgeting, how to start and maintain savings, that sort of thing.”

Participant 7: “Budgeting and saving. Those are definitely two key aspects that service users would need to learn.”

Participant 11: “We need to help service users increase their financial knowledge and skills. Realistically, a good place to start could be aspects such as learning how to budget or drawing up a basic savings plan.”

Apparent from the narratives provided above is that budgeting and saving were identified as two key aspects that service users would need to be educated in. Budgeting and saving both relate to key themes of financial literacy as identified by Engelbrecht and Ornellas (2019) and Engelbrecht (2009). This means that should service users be able to learn, comprehend, and apply these aspects, it can provide

the basis for service users to engage with other key aspects of financial literacy as well. Furthermore, because South Africans' financial vulnerability has risen since 2001 due to over-indebtedness and bad financial planning (Engelbrecht, 2011), by increasing savings and learning how to budget, service users can actively work towards establishing a buffer against poor socio-economic circumstances.

4.4.1.7.2. Cognitive aspects

Cognitive aspects were identified by participants as the second-most prevalent reason why service users should be educated in terms of financial literacy education. This category was further divided in aspects such as prioritisation (regarding wants versus needs) and learning a sense of economic longevity, aimed at looking towards the future, to help service users understand the value of money.

Participant 4: "A sense of longevity is integral for service users to learn and adapt. If there is no future planning, service users will be unable to grow their money. I think it will be truly difficult to help uplift service users from poor socio-economic conditions without understanding the necessity of a mindset that looks towards the future."

Participant 12: "In many service users who struggle with finances I have noticed that they cannot prioritize and plan ahead. I have witnessed countless times how if, service users are paid on a Friday, by the Monday all their money is spent. This type of behaviour indicates to me that, firstly, they do not understand the value of their money, and secondly, there is a great need to help service users to learn to prioritize what they need to buy versus what they want to buy."

Participant 15: "...Another big reason why I think service users struggle to work responsibly with their finances is because they may not understand the value of money. If, through budgeting and saving, service users can see how much more they can stretch their money, they may be able to start conceptualising money differently, which might give them a reason to engage in positive economic behaviour more often."

From the participants narratives provided above, it is apparent that aspects related to the mind are crucial when engaging in financial literacy education with service users. This is as, by understanding the value of money, a mind-shift regarding spending behaviour can be developed. If service users are able to prioritize, in terms of planning and application, the potential exists that they would be able to stretch their money further, enabling them to live with less financial stress. It is imperative that such a

mindset change be advocated as part of financial literacy education's initial stages as research has shown that adults whose positive financial habits were shaped at an earlier age is more correlated to financial well-being (Bruhn, de Souza Leao, Legovini, Marchetti, & Zia, 2013; Drever, Odders-White, Kalish, Else-Quest, Hoagland, & Nells, 2015).

4.4.1.7.3 Practical aspects

The final category related to the sub-theme of aspects that service users should be educated in, regards certain practical considerations. Here, the participants identified that many service users lack crucial life skills like understanding and applying technological skills and knowledge. Furthermore, there was indicated that aspects such as helping service users avoid unnecessary loans and debt and helping them to navigate debt were the most pertinent.

Participant 9: "Practical things you know, like understanding why it is a bad idea to get into debt without a plan to get out of it, or how to navigate situations of debt if they're already in it. I think centring debt as a key focus area for financial literacy is imperative as many service users who desperately need financial literacy education experience problems with debt."

Participant 10: "Many of my older service users are completely technologically impaired – they cannot even use ATM's. If one also considers the fact that there are many useful resources that can be accessed online, people without technological literacy will struggle and continue to struggle as the world is getting more digital by the day. By teaching them technological skills and knowledge, it can also lay the foundation for teaching them other important aspects related to (for example) issues of finances such as navigating debt and its consequences."

Participant 17: "Debt can be difficult and scary to navigate even when one is financially literate, so for service users who are stuck in debt without financial literacy, it might seem like an unending nightmare. It is therefore crucial to educate service users in a theme of debt."

Technology is playing an ever-increasing role in day-to-day life. As technology continues to evolve, the need to be technologically literate is slowly rising. As noted by participant ten, many of her service users are technologically inept. Though this is not a problem in itself, it becomes problematic when it hinders their access to

resources. According to Haushofer and Fehr (2014) a lack of access to resources can be conceptualised as forming part of poverty. The significance of this relates to technology's role – it presents many platforms where information and resources can be readily accessed. Therefore, if service users can be educated to be technologically literate, they can use technology to access resources and information that they would have been unable to previously. Finally, Lee (2016) and Wessel (2013) both argue for the use of technology as a medium to facilitate financial literacy education as technology as a medium has the potential to increase the scope of the intervention.

A potential relationship between debt and technology can also be observed. This is stated as, if service users can learn new technological knowledge and skills, part of that knowledge may translate to skills and knowledge pertaining to financial literacy education. Important to note however, is that debt can have a crippling effect on a person, which is why debt should be a theme that is dealt with in the initial stages of the education. It also makes sense when considering the needs of the client. As previously mentioned in this chapter, if service users' basic needs are not met, one cannot expect them to focus on (for example) interpersonal goals. The same reasoning can be applied to situations of debt – one cannot expect service users to empower and lift themselves out of poor socio-economic circumstances if they are still yoked by debt.

4.4.2. Theme 2: The role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education

Themes	Sub-Themes	Categories
The role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education	Intervention utilised when educating service users regarding financial literacy education	Generic social work intervention Specialized intervention Challenges to intervention
	Pertinent role-players to be involved in the financial literacy education of service users.	Social workers Business communities Government

	Key factors in the operationalisation of financial literacy endeavours	Social work Schools Practical considerations
	Role of social workers regarding the financial literacy education of service users.	Facilitator Agent of empowerment Enabler
	Challenges related to financial literacy education of service users	Issues of mentality and behaviour Logistical issues
	Boons to aid in the facilitation of financial literacy education of service users	Social worker skillset Success stories as a motivating factor
	Financial literacy education as contributor towards poverty alleviation and social development	Educational benefits Cognitive benefits Societal benefits

Table 4.4.2: the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education

In this section the participants were asked various questions that pertain to the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education. They were asked to describe whether they were doing anything in their service rendering to educate their service users, which role-players they viewed as key in the facilitation of financial literacy education, what they thought the best way was to operationalise financial literacy education, what they viewed their role to be in the financial literacy education of service users, what challenges may hinder the process, which boons might aid the process, and whether they thought financial literacy education of service users may contribute to social development.

4.4.2.1. Intervention utilised when educating service users regarding financial literacy education

The first sub-theme related to the theme of the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education to service users that emerged regarded the intervention methods utilised by social workers when educating service users in terms of financial literacy education. Participants identified generic social work intervention, specialized intervention and challenges to intervention as the main categories related to this sub-theme.

4.4.2.1.1. Generic social work intervention

The first (and most prevalent) category that was identified in regard to the sub-theme of interventions utilised is that of generic social work intervention. The participants indicated that this category pertained to various forms of generic social work intervention, such as individual-, group-, and community work.

Participant 4: “Generic social work does have an educational component to it. Perhaps the best way to mobilise financial literacy education would be through groupwork or community work initiatives as they will be able to increase the scope and reach of the programs.”

Participant 13: “Groupwork is the way I would approach it. It can provide a sense of unity amongst the service users when they see that there are other people who might struggle with the same things they do. It can also be an encouraging experience if they see their successes and build each other up.”

Participant 18: “I think individual sessions with service users might work best as many people may feel shy or embarrassed to talk about their finances.”

As noted by participant four, generic social work does have an educational element to it. Though this element is usually focused on other themes (such as for example domestic violence) the possibility exists that existing structures for programmes can be adapted to include financial literacy education. Engelbrecht and Ornellas (2019) provide insight regarding the role of social work in relation to the relationship between financial capability development (financial literacy education would fall under this umbrella term) and community development. There is explained that social work has the ability to provide holistic person-in-environment-focused intervention if financial capability development can be incorporated in discourses of community development

(Engelbrecht and Ornellas, 2019). The value of this lies in sustainable development, as, if community education (financial literacy education in the context of this particular study) can be a key theme in aspects of community development, a larger possibility exists that more service users would be able to engage with the aforementioned interventions. Crucially to this strategy, would be social workers' roles in facilitating and advocating for sustainable developmental practice, as noted above. However, studies conducted by Stuart (2016) and Engelbrecht and Ornellas (2019) found that social workers often feel unequipped or irresponsible for adopting such role within intervention. This highlights a further necessary to ensure that social workers are adequately equipped when rendering intervention initiatives as discussed above.

A study conducted by Lee (2016) found that social workers felt most comfortable assisting service users at an individual- and community level when it came to financial literacy initiatives, echoing the responses of the participants presented above. Furthermore, a study conducted by Widyaningrum, Bhat, and Lee (2019) found that skills taught in the undergraduate social work degree can benefit financial literacy education initiatives and their applications greatly, further solidifying the role of generic social work in regards to financial literacy education initiatives.

4.4.2.1.2. Specialised interventions

The second category related to the sub-theme of interventions utilised regarding financial literacy education was identified as specialised intervention by the participants. Specialised intervention regards all intervention types that do not fall under the generic social work banner. The main types of specialised intervention that was determined as prevalent were, facilitating financial training or workshops and linking service users with financial role-players to engage with them regarding financial literacy education.

Participant 5: "Our organisation started presenting financial wellness trainings and workshops to service users. These trainings regard themes such as budgeting, how to save, the dangers of debt etc – all themes that relate to financial literacy education."

Participant 14: "The best way to engage service users in terms of financial literacy education is to connect them with actual financial professionals. It can be role-players from the business community, or the banks maybe. So, the social worker's role would

be to help facilitate the sessions by helping the service users to engage with the appropriate financial resources.

Specialised intervention such as the examples described above would require cooperation between various role-players to ensure that the service users obtain quality intervention. Specifically, regarding financial literacy education, Widyaningrum, Bhat and Lee (2019) found that various social work skills can assist in this process. An example of this is how social workers can utilise their interpersonal skills to develop rapport and trustful relationships between the financial role-players, themselves, and the service users. Furthermore, to aid in the facilitation process of financial literacy initiatives, Lee (2016) notes that social workers can also help service users to address issues that may hinder them from appropriately engaging with the role-players and initiatives. A final consideration regards Edigheji's (2010) statement where he argues that the state should be the leader of economic- and social development, alongside participation of other role-players in partnership. Therefore, if specialised intervention is to be utilised as a main vehicle for the mobilisation of financial literacy education, it is apparent that role-players such as credit advisors, financial institutions and specialised NGO's would need to culminate and work together throughout the process. Important to note is that increased engagement from external role-players (such as the state and business community), needs to be coupled with increased efforts advocating social responsibility to deter financial institutions from using collaborative platforms to push their own products or agendas.

4.4.2.1.3. Challenges to intervention

The third and final category that was identified by participants in relation to the sub-theme of interventions utilised regards perceived challenges to intervention. The participants compounded the challenges into two main challenges – a caseload that is much too extensive and a lack of time.

Participant 7: "The caseload that social workers have in general is way too extensive to expect them to deliver the best possible service. There is no way that you can work effectively on more than, I would say...twenty files at any given time. Currently however, the average caseload of social workers at my organisation is about 45-50 cases at any given time. The large caseload also results in there not being time to start incorporating new interventions (like for example financial literacy)."

Participant 10: “Financial literacy education does not fall under the normal scope of our work. Although I agree that it should be part of the normal scope of our work because there is a great need for it, our caseloads are far too extensive. This results in us not having the time to always adequately render our services, even less so for starting new programs or implementing new interventions.”

Though social workers may face challenges regarding caseload and time regardless of where they practice, South Africa’s context is different. This is stated as poverty is a massive issue as unemployment is at 27.1% (Statistics South Africa, 2018) meaning that approximately 15 million at any given time are unemployed. Why this is significant is due to the fact that unemployment feeds into socio-economic challenges associated with poverty. This means that until the poverty and unemployment figures are drastically reduced, social workers will forever be overburdened and have too little time available for what they need to do. Furthermore, if considering the approach to financial literacy education to be multi-disciplinary, other challenges apart from caseload and time will emerge. This is confirmed by a study conducted by Lee (2016) where he found that social workers working alongside business community role-players in facilitating microfinance initiatives, were especially challenged in terms of finding an understanding between various role-players as there was little collaboration. This was as, even though the approach was multi-disciplinary, each role-player acted in their own manner and without much communication or consideration of the other role-players.

Interestingly, a study conducted by Engelbrecht (2008a) found that social workers did not think that aspects of ‘job creation’ fell under the scope of their expected service rendering, linking with the results from Lee’s study (2016) presented above. If then, social workers do not regard intervention aimed at promoting and stimulating economic development in service users, as their responsibility, one cannot argue that social workers understand or are implementing measures of social development. This is stated as, Midgley, who is regarded as one of the key authors in social development in South Africa, argues that social development can only occur when human-, and economic development are stimulated in parallel with one another (Midgley, 1995). Therefore, questions can be raised whether generic social work in South Africa can be viewed as social developmental in nature, as a clear consensus exists that social workers either feel uninformed, unequipped, or irresponsible for implementing

measures or interventions related to the economic development of service users. When bearing the aforementioned in mind, a picture forms that illustrates a reality many social workers in South Africa face – there is a great lack of emphasis placed on social development (as there is no engagement with the economic development of service users), and crisis intervention seems to be the main service that is rendered. This is also echoed in responses of the participants where they indicated that due to their high caseload and lack of time, as indicated in the narratives provided above.

4.4.2.2. Pertinent role-players to be involved in the financial literacy education of service users

The second sub-theme that was identified in relation to the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education regards pertinent role-players to be involved in the financial literacy education of service users. Under this sub-theme four categories were identified as most pertinent. These categories are social workers, the business community, and governmental role-players.

4.4.2.2.1. Social workers

Social workers were identified by most participants as being a key role-player in the facilitation of financial literacy education to service users. The role that social workers are to play in the process was compounded into three aspects – adopting the role of a facilitator to ensure the process runs smoothly, acting as an enabler for service user progress by referring and linking them to the appropriate financial resources, and spearheading community projects in partnership with community-based organisations.

Participant 1: “Social workers tend to make great facilitators because in many instances they have great interpersonal skills.”

Participant 8: “As social workers, if one has established networks of resources in the community, one can assist the process by ensuring that service users have access to the appropriate resources and opportunities in the community. By acting as a middleman between service users and other financial role-players, one can ensure that the process operates smoother.”

Participant 13: “Social workers are often great with linking networks together. If one can partner with already-existing community-based organisations, it can open avenues of resources that may have been inaccessible if trying to run the initiatives

alone. Also, by partnering with an organisation that service users are familiar with, may increase the trust and buy-in from the service users.”

Apparent from the narratives provided above is that social workers were identified as being critical to the process of facilitating financial literacy education. In regard to the role of facilitator, a study conducted by Widyaningrum, Bhat, and Lee (2019) identified facilitation skills as a great asset regarding the implementation of micro-finance initiatives. Micro-finance is defined as an array of financial services provided to people with low income (Widyaningrum, *et al*, 2019) and thus can be viewed as a financial intervention strategy that could be explored under financial literacy initiatives. When considering the role of being an enabler to service users, (by linking them with appropriate networks, professionals or resources), Kindle (2013) argues that social work, as a profession, would need to have a calculated response to challenges associated with a changing economic environment. This means that, as the economic landscape changes and adapts, so too social workers would need to be flexible to adapt with it. If social workers are unable to grow with the changing economic times, it can result in the scope and aim of financial literacy initiatives being completely skewed or inapplicable, potentially rendering them ineffective. By partnering with already-existing community-based organisations can help inform the social workers regarding current economic needs of the service users that will help ensure that the initiatives presented are appropriate to the needs of the service users. Finally, by working together with community-based organisations, Karger (2015) notes that social workers will be better equipped to help service users avoid certain practical financial issues such as pitfalls of debt, as service users often have trust in community-based organisations with which they are familiar.

4.4.2.2.2. Business community

The second category that emerged identified the business community as a key role-player in the facilitation of financial literacy education initiatives to service users. Participants indicated that financial professionals made up the demographic of this category, specifically referring to employers, credit advisors, and financial institutions like banks, as they key role-players.

Participant 7: “It would be ideal if the business community could be involved as it can help ease the strain on the social workers’ shoulders. Credit advisors could be a good

resource to engage with as they would be better able to assist the service users in learning to navigate debt and plan for the future.”

Participant 9: “Financial institutions such as banks can be a good role-player to try and integrate into service delivery. Banks have large platforms of resources for service users to engage with, and because of their status and size, linking with them might also result in a larger scope for the services rendered. Role-players such as banks would, therefore, be great to utilise when trying to raise awareness for campaigns, due to the aforementioned reasons.”

Participant 10: “Employers definitely need to be involved. They know their workers the best and because of the working relationship between them, if they can help the service users help themselves, it can result in the service users doing their job better because they realise that their employer cares about them and their needs.”

The need to effectively engage various financial professionals in the process of facilitating financial literacy education is invaluable as studies have shown that many social workers feel unprepared to incorporate financial capability into their service rendering (Birkenmaier, Loke, & Hageman, 2016; Gates, Koza, & Akabas, 2017; Kindle, 2013; Loke, Watts, & Kakoti, 2013). Since the service users’ wellbeing and financial upliftment is the main concern of financial literacy, by engaging financial professionals for assistance, targeting strategies can be shaped to be realistic and suitable to the service users’ needs (Herselman, 2012). In doing so, financial literacy initiatives can be as an investment into human capital that can underpin future growth (HSRC, 2013). Should more financial professional become involved in financial literacy initiatives, it can start the conversation for other financial professionals regarding the concept of corporate social responsibility. Hermannson and Olofsson (2008:17) describe corporate social responsibility as “a heterogeneous practice which is auctioned by an enterprise to integrate social, environmental, ethical and human rights concerns in their companies’ operations and core strategy in close collaboration with their stakeholders with the aim to improve community well-being whilst meeting the companies’ economic objective.” This elucidates the potential value that financial professionals can add in terms of financial literacy initiatives.

4.4.2.2.3. Government

Government was identified as the third major role-player that should be involved in the facilitation of financial literacy education initiatives to service users. Specifically, participants indicated that the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), the Department of Social Development and the Department of Education would be the most integral in ensuring adequate implementation of financial literacy initiatives.

Participant 8: “SASSA should definitely play a larger role. They need to somehow take greater responsibility when handing out grant cards. If there could be some sort of assessment coupled with a few mandatory sessions of financial training before service users receive the grant cards, it could be beneficial. This is as, many service users reliant on grants lack financial knowledge and skills meaning that they start depending on grants as a sole income, rather than a substantiating income. This is problematic.”

Participant 10: “SASSA needs to enforce better steps to ensure that the service users are more financially educated and thereby protected. I have seen many instances where loan sharks take and keep users’ grant cards because they are too far in debt, which then results in the users’ having no income.”

Participant 13: “For initiatives such as these (financial literacy) to have the biggest impact, one needs to start as young as possible. I think the Department of Education should play a larger role in making themes that relate to issues of financial literacy part of the mandatory curriculum from primary school. They also need to take the responsibility of ensuring that these changes are applied at schools.”

Participant 16: “The Department of Social Development needs to be in charge of the mobilisation plan of such (financial literacy) initiatives. Perhaps they can review what themes of service delivery is viewed as critical social service delivery sphere and make an effort to raise awareness (and implement) measures related to the theme of financial literacy education.”

SASSA is the organisation that is responsible for providing social assistance grants to South Africans. Due to the large number of persons struggling with finances and living in poverty in South Africa, service users often rely on grants as their sole form of income, as noted by participant eight. This is problematic as, many of the aforementioned service users, lack financial appropriate financial knowledge and skills, and as noted by participant 10 above, this sometimes results in loan sharks

keeping their cards if they get too far behind in debt, which then results in them having no income. According to chapter eleven of the National Development Plan (Republic of South Africa, 2012) a social protective function within the social developmental framework to address the needs of the vulnerable and at-risk populations should be the focus of agents involved in social service delivery. This means that agents such as SASSA and governmental entities also need to adhere to this focus, which means they need to take greater steps to ensure the social protection of vulnerable service users. Regarding the Department of Social Development and Department of Education, if they feel that the task of creating and implementing financial literacy themes in curriculums of educational institutes to be daunting, perhaps they can look to programmes such as the *Curricular Guide for Economic Wellbeing* (Council for Social Work Education, 2017) as a point of departure. The *Curricular Guide for Economic Wellbeing* provides a framework and conceptualisation of the field of economic wellbeing, and as such, can relate to the needs of service users regarding financial literacy education (Hageman, Sherraden, Birkenmeier, & Loke, 2019).

4.4.2.3 Key factors in the operationalisation of financial literacy endeavours

The third sub-theme that arose regarding the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education entails key factors in the operationalisation of financial literacy endeavours. Participants identified social work and schools as key factors, while also providing insight into some practical considerations that would need to be addressed.

4.4.2.3.1. Social work as key factor

As per the previous sub-theme, social work was identified by the majority of the participants as a key factor that regards the operationalisation of financial literacy endeavours. There was indicated that building trust with the service users was a main entry point to effective service delivery and identified group work and community work as the pertinent vessels through which operationalisation would best occur.

Participant 2: "Initiatives such as these would need to be relationship-based. In any intervention, it is imperative that the service users relate to and trust the social worker as this will help ensure sustainability of the project."

Participant 11: "Community-based approaches can be a useful to employ when approaching the operationalisation of financial literacy initiatives. It is crucial to ensure however that there is sustainability – the service users must be continuously engaged,

otherwise the projects may struggle. The service users need to be invested in the process and making it a recurring theme in their life will help with that, I think,”

Participant 12: “Groupwork should be investigated as a medium through which financial literacy education can be operationalised. Groupwork can be especially useful in helping service users relate to one another (when they see that others are experiencing the same challenges as them), and it can also assist in building sustainability if the service users can keep one another accountable.”

Apparent from the narratives provided above is that, regardless of the vehicle used to operationalise financial literacy education initiatives, sustainability seems to be an imperative factor. Scheirer (2013) defines sustainability as the continued use of program components and activities for the continued achievement of desirable program and population outcomes. One way to perhaps ensure that aspects of sustainability are considered regards social workers providing interpersonal group support services, as a means to ensure that all members stay focused, active and engaged in the process (Lee, 2016). When considering community-based approaches to the facilitation of financial literacy education, to ensure sustainability, it is imperative that the programs be easily accessible. One way to aim in achieving this, is to apply outreach social work. Though many definitions of outreach social work exist, they overlap in stating that outreach practices ‘reach out’ to targets, offer services, engage and bring individuals or groups into contact with social support and social services (Grymonprez, Roose, & Roets, 2017). Thus, if outreach social work can be applied to ensure that financial literacy education initiatives are always accessible to service users, it may increase initiative sustainability.

4.4.2.3.2. Schools as key factor

The second category that emerged regarding the operationalisation of financial literacy initiatives regards schools as a key factor. Here, the participants overwhelmingly identified that it be imperative that financial literacy education be made part of the school curriculum from a young age.

Participant 3: “Schools need to be utilised. Maybe the Department of Education can make it a mandatory part of the curriculum from primary school.”

Participant 5: “If financial literacy education can be incorporated in the school curriculum, I think it could have a large impact on the success of such endeavours.”

Participant 9: “They must start exposing the youth to these initiatives from early in their lives. Perhaps it can be made part of the school curriculum.”

Participant 17: “Schools would need to be involved as their platforms are established and they can have quite a large reach. If it can be made part of the curriculum it might be quite effective.”

Participant 18: “We need to start educating kids in terms of financial literacy. If the government can step in and make such themes part of the mandatory curriculum, I think the potential exists that it can have a great impact.”

In staying with the theme of accessibility, as presented in the previous sub-theme, if financial literacy education initiatives can be incorporated into mandatory school curriculums, it will ensure that all service users at the school get an equal opportunity at accessibility to the initiatives. This can be a major advantage as many issues of financial literacy stem from systemic problems associated with the apartheid past (Daniels, Partridge, Kekana & Musundwa, 2013). If schools can be utilised to promote access and opportunity (with regards to financial literacy) service delivery will also correlate with the global definition of social work (International Federation of Social Work, 2014). The definition states that social work should be a lever in pursuing the agenda of social justice and human rights (IFSW, 2014). Therefore, by making financial literacy education part of school curriculums, service deliverers will be working in direct line with the definition mentioned above. Furthermore, easier access to provisions and opportunities for all service users can result in increased sustainability of financial literacy endeavours (Grymonprez, Roose, & Roets, 2017).

4.4.2.3.3. Practical considerations

The third and final category that was identified in relation to the operationalisation of financial literacy initiatives regards certain practical considerations that would need to be considered when strategizing operationalisation strategies. Participants identified that key considerations include: the information provided through the programs need to be appropriate to the service user’s literacy level, and the language utilised should fit the target audience to increase their buy-in into the program.

Participant 1: “It is imperative that the programs presented be simplified to the service user’s level. If they are bombarded with information, it may make them feel overwhelmed which might decrease their motivation to continue participating.”

Participant 14: “If the language utilised can be adapted to the target audience, I think it can make a big difference. If one program (for example) targets students, if the language of the content is relatable to them, it can increase their motivation to partake in it.”

Participant 15: “The trainings provided should be appropriate to the level of the client. For example, if the client is struggling with budgeting, there is no use in teaching them about balloon payments.”

When considering the narratives presented above, it becomes apparent that financial literacy initiatives need to be tailored to the target market that they are aimed at. This indicates that it is crucial to work alongside service users to ensure that the initiatives are appropriately aimed at the needs of the service users. If considering the appropriateness of language and content of these initiatives as imperative, it further strengthens the case for financial literacy education to be implemented from a primary school level. In doing so, one can ensure that a benchmark-competency level can be standardised, which will help inform the focus of future initiatives. Regarding service users that are illiterate and too old for school, programs such as ABET (Adult Basic Education and Training) might be useful to implement before or alongside financial literacy education initiatives. In doing so, one can aim to achieve a similar standardised benchmark for adults, which can also help to inform the planning and application of financial literacy focused service delivery. Important to note is that approaching the endeavours in such a way may also result in individual level outcomes, meaning that social workers and the initiatives need to be adaptable to the particular contexts in which they are required (Lee, 2016).

4.4.2.4. Role of social workers regarding the financial literacy education of service users

The fourth sub-theme related to the theme of the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education pertains to the specific role that participants felt social workers needed to adopt. There was identified that being a facilitator, an agent of empowerment, and enabler were the most important roles for social workers to fill.

4.4.2.4.1. Facilitator

Participants indicated that adopting the role of facilitator was one of the best ways in which social workers could contribute to the process of financial literacy education of

service users. Specifically, with regards to the facilitation of group work sessions focused on financial literacy themes.

Participant 5: “Social workers tend to have very good interpersonal skills which can make them great facilitators. Groupwork sessions can be useful when facilitating financial trainings, while individual sessions can be valuable in instances where service users may feel shy or embarrassed about their finances.”

Participant 6: “Social workers should play a facilitator role alongside financial professionals. If the format of financial literacy education initiatives can be centred around groupwork, it can result in more service users being reached at once, in comparison with individual sessions.”

Participant 12: “If we, as social workers, can incorporate financial themes into already-existing groupwork programmes it could be beneficial as service users are already comfortable in the setting. However, when conducting assessment on new service users, one can decide whether they would find most benefit in a group- or individual based intervention setting and then adapt accordingly.”

As participants have identified the role of social workers to be most appropriate when facilitating group sessions, links between the approaches to intervention and financial literacy themes, will be considered. As discussed earlier, microfinance is a financial intervention strategy where facilitation skills are invaluable (Wadyaningrum *et al*, 2019). If, in microfinance interventions, a focus can be placed on *the importance of human relationships*, as a social work value, the possibility exists that group members can be stimulated to nurture solidarity, peer support, and self-esteem (Wadyaningrum *et al*, 2019). Should a sense of uniformity be achieved within the group, as their knowledge and skills base grow, there can also be looked at group lending practices to help the group members apply their knowledge and skills. Successful examples of the aforementioned has been witnessed in India in instances where the government subsidised national banks to get involved with financial literacy initiatives (Kalpana, 2016). However, it is imperative to be aware of potential hazards to group lending without providing proper support systems for service users in the form of saving, teambuilding, screening for prior debt, and group decision making. This is stated as though India has seen success with microfinances programs, they also experienced a sub-prime lending crisis that resulted in multiple suicides due to unpaid microfinance

debt (Polgreen, & Bajaj, 2010). Thus, group microfinances initiatives can be a useful tool in financial intervention strategies, as long as there are support structures for the service users in place to utilise, and the service users have significantly improved their financial knowledge and skills.

4.4.2.4.2. Agent of empowerment

Participants indicated that the second-most pertinent role of social workers in the facilitation of financial literacy education to service users, regards acting as an agent of empowerment. Specifically, there was identified that this role entailed working as a motivational force to support service users and equipping them with financial knowledge and skills.

Participant 1: “Experiences of poverty can often leave service users feeling hopeless and overwhelmed. It is therefore crucial that as social workers, we provide support to service users while they are going through the financial literacy process. If we can avoid the aforementioned feelings by providing support services, it can result in the service users being more motivated to continue engaging with the process.”

Participant 2: “By working alongside service users to help them determine (for themselves) what the issues are that they want help with can be rewarding. In doing so, social workers can inspire motivation and self-confidence in service users if they feel that they can be the focus of their own situations.”

Participant 8: “I think social workers should take a hands-on approach when rendering services of financial literacy education. Of course, for this to work, social workers need to ensure that they are up to date with the financial knowledge required to present an adequate service to the service users. For example, if we can teach service users budgeting skills in recurring individual sessions, social workers can act as a guidance figure, keep them accountable from session to session, and render support services as they are needed. This holistic approach to financial literacy education can be quite valuable, I think.”

When considering the narratives presented above, the theme of supporting service users and enabling service users to support themselves seems to be central. If conceptualising the aforementioned accounts against the backdrop of the National Development Plan (Republic of South Africa, 2012) even more benefits come to light. According to the National Development Plan, effective community development can

be a key strategy in enhancing individual- and community functioning in dire circumstances (Republic of South Africa, 2012). Therefore, if social workers can actively work towards increasing service user motivation to learn and apply financial literacy education to their circumstances, the potential exists that more members of their communities might become interested if they witness success stories. In doing so, it can potentially increase the scope of initiatives by attracting more service users. Should this be achieved, one can argue that the aforementioned approaches and strategies can be viewed as efforts of developmental social welfare. This is crucial to note as, according to the National Development Plan, developmental social welfare can be a key path in ensuring that the most at-risk populations will have social protection and social support in the form of social service delivery throughout their lives (Republic of South Africa, 2012).

4.4.2.4.3. Enabler

The third and final category that emerged regarding the role of social workers in financial literacy education pertains to social workers adopting the role of an enabler. Participants indicated that here, aspects such as linking service users with appropriate role-players and resources and liaising with financial experts to coordinate and present services, were most important.

Participant 4: “Especially important in terms of financial intervention strategies, is that social workers ensure that their own financial knowledge is up to date, and that they know which financial resources exist in their communities. To ensure that service users attain the best possible service, (when it comes to financial aspects), social workers should engage with financial professionals to inspire them to work alongside the social workers.”

Participant 7: “As social workers, we often have access to great networks of various forms of professionals. I think, with something like financial literacy education, if you want to do it right from the start, incorporating and linking with other financial professionals is imperative.”

Participant 10: “A multi-disciplinary approach is needed. Social workers need to work alongside financial professionals to ensure that the content of financial literacy programs is appropriate and in-line with the latest in finance, to ensure that service users have access to the best possible quality of service.”

For financial literacy education initiatives to be effective, there would need to be a buy-in from financial role-players, apart from social workers. This is as, though social workers might be educated in terms of their finances, financial professionals will always be able to offer extra angles and more in-depth knowledge. Also, by stimulating cooperation between role-players, the possibility exists that initiatives can increase in scope, which means more service users can be reached at once. This is relevant as, many of the core conditions addressed by social work are closely related to economic conditions that characterise many disadvantaged populations such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to financial opportunities, indicating a need for sufficient economic intervention strategies (Lee, 2016). Furthermore, because economic development is integral to community development practice (Lee, 2016; Feehan, Feit, & Bekker, 2013; Soifer, McNeely, Costa, & Pickering-Bernheim, 2014) the need to increase motivation of service users and financial role-players regarding engagement in economic intervention strategies, remains paramount.

4.4.2.5. Challenges regarding the financial literacy education of service users

The fifth sub-theme that was identified regards challenges that may be experienced throughout the process of providing financial literacy education to service users. Participants indicated that issues of mentality and behaviour and logistical issues were the main challenges that could arise.

4.4.2.5.1. Issues of mentality and behaviour

Participants indicated that challenges related to the mentality and behaviour of service users may be a prime challenge. There was indicated that breaking negative mindsets and past behaviour patterns was the most prevalent category to emerge.

Participant 3: "Service users may not cooperate if they do not trust or know the social workers or the programs. They may also be reluctant to listen and learn if they do not understand why it is crucial that they do. I think in many cases one will see that mindsets change more readily when partnered with practical aspects to apply. For example, you might need to struggle to get service users to understand why it is important to save, before they might be willing to try and change how they behave."

Participant 8: "I think a big challenge will be to make financial literacy education attractive to service users. To do that, perceptions regarding aspects such as how they

view social workers, how they view their own situations would need to be explored and addressed, as necessary.”

Participant 13: “A major challenge would be to break negative lifestyle behavioural patterns of service users. For example, if they always spend their money in the first weekend that they receive it, it will take time to educate them so they can understand why that is a bad idea, and it will take time to teach and help them apply new positive behaviours. If service users do not understand or relate to what the process requires, it might be difficult to get them to engage appropriately.”

As the narratives provided above indicate, challenges of mentality and behavioural patterns would need to be systematically approached. It is imperative that service users understand why certain mindsets and behavioural patterns are not conducive to personal economic growth. When considering that aspects of financial literacy education regards behaviour such as forming spending habits and producing certain (positive) patterns of financial behaviour (Engelbrecht, 2008c; Jumpstart Coalition, 2007), the potential value of changing mindsets and behaviours are elucidated. Thus, by considering that mentality can be linked to applications of financial behaviour, the ability and confidence to effectively apply knowledge related to personal finance can be regarded as a key focus when trying to break negative mindsets and behavioural patterns (Huston, 2010).

4.4.2.5.2. Logistical issues

The second category that emerged related to challenges that may be experienced in the facilitation of financial literacy education regards logistical issues. Participants identified that logistical issues, in this regard, took on the form of issues of communications between role-players, and service user accessibility to resources.

Participant 5: “When considering challenges that are related to a multi-disciplinary approach, a practical problem is often effective or appropriate communication between role-players. For multi-disciplinary approaches to work, all role-players will need to be aware of what is going on in the process at any given time.”

Participant 17: “Accessibility to resources is always a challenge that comes to mind. Many of the service users that financial literacy initiatives would be aimed at are often located in geographical areas where resources required to adequately implement financial literacy (such as banks, credit advisors, social work organisations) are not

readily available. A very practical consideration then, regards how these initiatives would reach service users in more far-out, rural locations.”

As apparent from the narratives provided above, a multi-disciplinary approach to financial literacy education would seemingly be an adequate approach regarding its implementation. With a multi-disciplinary approach, comes its own challenges, however. A study conducted by Lee (2016) confirmed the narrative of participant five by finding that there are often divisions in communication between cross-sector role-players. The challenge of adequate communication between role-players can also lead to issues of accessibility to resources, especially if the role-player and resource comprise of the same institution (for example a bank involved with the facilitation of financial literacy endeavours). Therefore, to ensure a well-rounded provision of accessibility to resources, strategies need to encapsulate aspects that look to build individual- or community capital to increase access to individual development accounts and community development financial institutions (Lee, 2016; Caplan, 2014; Green & Haines, 2012). If conducted in this manner, the possibility exists that the increase in individual- or community capital can act as a buffer to potential logistical issues that may be experienced in service delivery with multiple role-players.

4.4.2.6. Boons to aid in the facilitation of financial literacy education

The sixth sub-theme related to the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education to be identified, regards boons that could aid the social workers throughout the process. Here, the most prevalent boons that were identified included skills possessed by social workers which could be a valuable asset in increasing practical resources, and success stories could be vital in increasing positive client mentalities.

4.4.2.6.1. Social worker skillset

The first category that arose pertains to various skills that social workers possess that could aid the financial literacy facilitation process. There was indicated that these skills particularly pertain to aspects such as linking service users to resources and opportunities to increase trust in the social workers and process, and utilising communication skills to establish a good relationship with service users, as well as other role-players.

Participant 2: “Social workers often possess good communication skills. These skills can be invaluable when trying to establish a good relationship with the targeted service user group.”

Participant 4: “By utilising their communication skills, social workers can ensure that a working relationship, build on trust, can be generated with the service users, and other role-players involved in the process.”

Participant 8: “If social workers can successfully and continuously link service users and role-players with the appropriate resources and opportunities, more than likely, it will lead to an increased sense of trust between social workers and the service users, as well as between other role-players and between other role-players and service users.”

Participant 13: “If social workers (and other role-players) can ensure that the facilitation process runs smoothly, it can result in the trust experienced by service users (towards the role-players involved in the facilitation process) greatly increasing. From my own service delivery, I have noticed that if service users are invested in a program or process, there is an increased chance that they will take it seriously and try to apply what they learn to their lives.”

Apparent from the narratives provided above is that the interpersonal skills possessed by social workers are viewed as integral to the process of facilitation by the participants. Interpersonal skills, especially with regards to communication skills, are critical for developing rapport and establishing trust between service users and the various role-players involved in the process (Widyaningrum *et al*, 2019). Lee (2016) notes that identifying factors that can facilitate or impede effective communication between various role-players and their sectors is integral when working towards establishing a basis of trust between role-players, as well as with the service users. When considering the indication that linking service users with the appropriate resources can result in increased trust, attention needs to be given to issues of sustainability, as noted by participant eight. Scheirer (2013) provides insight regarding important considerations when strategizing an initiative’s sustainability. There is noted that interventions may have a higher sense of sustainability if they are implemented appropriately before sustainability is assessed, indicating the need for financial literacy education initiatives to be well thought-through and sufficiently structured. Scheirer

(2013) continues by arguing that initiatives may have increased sustainability if service providers are strongly motivated to continue, which indicates the necessity of all role-players believing in the process that they are part of. Therefore, to ensure that financial literacy initiatives are as successful as possible, investment in the relationships between role-players and role-players and service users are imperative for sustainability to be achieved.

4.4.2.6.2. Success stories as a motivating factor

Participants indicated that the second category related to boons associated with the facilitation of financial literacy regards the increase of service users' motivation upon hearing and witnessing financial literacy success stories.

Participant 1: "Success stories in the community can intrigue new service users to also get involved in the initiatives. It can also raise the motivation of the service users who experienced it to stay involved in the process."

Participant 3: "If service users experience involved in the process experience positive results, it can lead to them telling their family and friends, which may entice other service users to get involved as well."

Participant 10: "Success stories can be really useful when trying to grow the service users base that are participating in the process. From my own experience, it can raise the motivation of service users which can result in sustained willingness to participate or the service user base increasing in number."

Participant 11: "Success stories can increase the social worker's reputation in the community and can especially be useful if the social workers or the project is still unknown or relatively new in the community. With increased trust, can also come increased instances of motivation."

The increase in service users' motivation due to the success stories experienced may lead to an increased service user base. Success stories can also help frame financial literacy education initiatives in a positive light, which may help increase their appeal as financial intervention strategies. If then, financial literacy education's reputation is positively impacted by service users sharing their stories of success, it may lead to a larger 'audience' (in this case the service users and other role-players) knowingly (or unknowingly) conceptualising financial literacy initiatives as a strengths-based form of intervention. Strengths-based interventions are characterised by viewing and

conceptualising individuals' challenges in terms of their strengths (Saleebey, 1992). Conceptualising service user success stories from a strengths-based perspective can therefore lead to increased service user, and role-player motivation if all parties frame challenges from an optimistic viewpoint.

Furthermore, by adopting a strengths-based perspective in terms of financial literacy education, also produces the possibility for service users to experience an increase in their perceived capability, functioning, and agency. As described in chapter two, capability refers to a person's freedom of opportunity (Banerjee, 2015), functioning regards various things a person succeeds in doing or being (Hick, 2014), and agency regards individual autonomy that allows individuals to make choices that steer them towards achieving capabilities and functioning (Fertig, 2012). If then, service users sharing success stories can assist in increasing service users' capability, it (success stories) can be viewed as a powerful, and crucial tool in the facilitation of financial literacy initiatives. When considering the impact that it may have, one can argue that financial literacy education initiatives should purposefully include a platform aimed at facilitating success stories to service users, as this could play a drastic role in increasing service user buy-in into financial education initiatives.

4.4.2.7. Financial literacy education as contributor towards poverty alleviation and social development.

The seventh sub-theme that emerged in relation to the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education, regards ways in which financial literacy education can contribute towards poverty alleviation and social development. Educational benefits that can lead to financial benefits with the right application was identified as the first category, cognitive benefits as the second, and societal benefits as the third.

4.4.2.7.1. Educational benefits

The first category that was identified in relation to the seventh sub-theme, pertains to educational benefits that could lead to financial benefits if the service users correctly applied the education to their lives.

Participant 2: "If service users can be educated to be financially literate, it can help provide them with a basic understanding of all the complex financial systems that one needs to navigate in today's age."

Participant 7: “An educational benefit that I think is sometimes overlooked, is the fact that even service users stuck in poverty can make smart economic decisions when correctly equipped. Adopting this strength perspective on the matter, might also open service providers’ eyes to the fact that the service users might be able to teach one another if they are adequately educated.”

Participant 14: “By helping service users understand and make sense of the financial environments around them, service providers can assist service users in navigating financial contexts better, through the application of the knowledge and skills taught under financial literacy initiatives.”

Participant 17: “Education is a powerful tool. If service users are able to effectively apply the knowledge and skills taught to them, it can result in their financial stressors decreasing. This can also aid in making their own life more manageable and systematically help them to raise themselves out of poverty.”

As apparent from the narratives provided above, participants indicated that educational benefits, that could result in increased financial benefits, is crucial in the pursuit of increasing service user financial autonomy. When considering Haushofer and Fehr’s (2014) exposition of poverty, further benefits of increased levels of education are elucidated. They explain that poverty is characterized not only by insufficient income but a multitude of factors such as dysfunctional institutions, exposure to violence and crime and aspects such as poor access to health care further benefits (Haushofer and Fehr, 2014). Therefore, if service users are educated and have the ability to apply their knowledge and skills as an act of engaging with the environments around them, it can result in them finding other, more productive ways of reaching and engaging societal structures as mentioned above. Furthermore, when considering that the adequate application of financial knowledge and skills can result in a more positive relationship experienced between the service users and their finances, the possibility is created that by reducing their financial stressors, service users would be able to engage more effectively with other aforementioned structures as noted in the exposition provided by Haushofer and Fehr (2014).

4.4.2.7.2 Cognitive benefits

Cognitive benefits were identified as the second category related to the sub-theme pertaining to ways in which financial literacy education can contribute to poverty alleviation and social development. Participants indicated that a stronger sense of financial autonomy can help service users to adopt a mindset of responsibility and independence, which can help them establish patterns of positive financial culture behaviours.

Participant 4: “As the process progresses and service users witness how their financial standing improves, it can lead to them understanding the reasons for the necessity of taking responsibility for one’s own situation. In doing so, they might instil new behavioural patterns to match their newfound mentality.”

Participant 10: “Being financial literate can help service users to better understand the reasons why they should take responsibility for their own situations. If they are able to identify their own needs and then actively work towards meeting them, it can lead to an increased sense of motivation and independence.”

Participant 13: “Equipping service users with knowledge and skills associated with financial literacy will provide service users with the tools they need to start and maintain aspects of a positive financial culture, where a positive financial culture entails doing things financially that are beneficial to themselves and their families.”

The importance of service users to take control over their own mental states is imperative as research from various parts of the world show that low levels of income, education and assets are correlated with a higher probability of having common mental disorders (Hanandita, & Tampubolon, 2014; Lund, Breen, Flisher, Kakuma, Corrigan, Joska, Swartz, & Patel, 2010). If then, service users are able to improve their financial standing, it can act as a buffer against factors associated with developing mental disorders. The need for service users to take control over their own mental states is further highlighted by studies that have found that emotional and material support are important buffers against stress and serve as a major predictor of physical and emotional wellbeing in low-income families (Goodman *et al*, 2013; Ali, Hawlins, & Chambers, 2010). Therefore, by assisting service users to apply financial knowledge and skills, service deliverers can help shape service user environments to be more conducive to aspects that will enhance service user mental health, thereby increasing

the likelihood to utilise practice of financial literacy as buffers against factors associated with developing mental disorders.

4.4.2.7.3. Societal benefits

The third and final category that arose under this sub-theme pertains to perceived societal benefits of financial literacy education initiatives as identified by the participants. Specifically, the participants indicated that financial literacy initiatives can contribute to social development if successfully implemented on a large scale and identified that aspects of accessibility, as well as a reduction in crime as the important societal benefits that may arise from doing so.

Participant 14: “If service users are equipped with the knowledge and skills associated with financial literacy, they will be better able to access and navigate resources and services in communities as they will have a better understanding of how the various structures work.”

Participant 16: “If financial literacy can be successful on a large scale, it can definitely contribute towards social development as, financial literacy is inherently comprised of aspects aimed at improving socio-economic circumstances. If social development can be achieved on a larger scale, I also think it will be reflected in societal indicators such as crime statistics dropping.”

Participant 18: “Many issues that face service users stuck in poverty have a financial root. Therefore, if financial literacy can be facilitated on a large scale, the possibility exists that it can contribute towards social development, resulting in aspects such as improved access to resources and organisational support structures.”

Social development, as described in chapter one, is characterised by a progression in human development, in parallel with economic development (Gray, 2006; Midgley, 1995). By considering large scale financial literacy implementation as a social developmental strategy aimed at poverty alleviation, the possibility exists that service users can increase their ability to engage with various resources and opportunities, thereby actively nurturing the service users’ positive financial behaviour (Sherraden, 2017; Huston, 2010). Though participant sixteen noted that improved social development can result in lowered instances of crime, it is to be noted that crime (as poverty) is a multi-dimensional phenomenon and as such, one cannot predict changes in it by only considering one variable. However, should instances of access to

resources and opportunities continually be held as a focus point of financial literacy education initiatives, it can provide valuable information that regards how service users are connected to society and social work (Maesele, 2012). By adopting this focus, financial literacy intervention strategies can be tailored to match the specific needs and contexts of service users, resulting in a larger possibility for financial literacy education to effectively work towards poverty alleviation and social development.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter sought to address the third objective of the study which regarded the empirical investigation of the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in social development. The research methodology was analysed as a point of departure in this chapter and was subsequently followed by a detailed account of the individual profiles of the participants. Two themes, with seven subsequent sub-themes, were identified from the interviews conducted.

Theme one regarded the profile of the participants' service users' financial literacy and was further compounded into seven sub-themes. The sub-themes were: identified as the main problems experienced by service users, definitions of poverty, reasons for service user poverty, reasons for service user over-indebtedness, reasons for service user illiteracy, reasons to educate service users to be literate and pertinent aspects that service users should be educated in.

Theme two regarded the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education and was also sub-divided into seven sub-themes. The sub-themes related to theme two were identified as: intervention utilised when educating service users in terms of financial literacy, pertinent role-players to be involved in the financial literacy education of service users, key factors in the operationalisation financial literacy education initiatives, the role of social workers regarding the facilitation of financial literacy initiatives, as well as the challenges and boons associated with the facilitation of financial literacy education initiatives.

The chapter to follow concerns conclusions and recommendations and as such, will present various conclusions drawn from the empirical study before presenting appropriate recommendations.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study has been to gain understanding of the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in facilitating social development. The theme of financial literacy education has been largely understudied in South Africa except for recent contributions made by Engelbrecht (2015) and Engelbrecht and Ornellas (2019). Though themes related to financial literacy education have been understudied in South Africa, there have been numerous studies undertaken regarding its value globally, both in the social work profession, as well as in other professions (Gutter & Renner, 2007; Schuchardt, Hanna, Hira, Lyons, Palmer & Xiao, 2009; Parker, 2010; Garcia, 2011; Fox, Bartholomae & Trombitas, 2012; Winter, Luhrmann & Serra Garcia, 2013; Banerjee, 2016; Kagotho, Ssewamala, Patak-Pietrafesa, & Byansi, 2018). To date, the majority of studies conducted, have largely found that the context against which financial literacy phenomena are evaluated are integral to its meaningful application (Sherraden *et al*, 2017; Huang, Sherraden, Despard, Rothwell, Friedline, Doran, & McKinney, 2017; Birkenmaier, Sherraden, Frey, & Santiago, 2018; Sherraden, Birkenmaier, & Collins, 2018; Sherraden, & Huang, 2019). Though literature notes that context is crucial when considering the application of financial literacy education initiatives, there have been studies conducted in countries with similar socio-economic challenges as South Africa, such as India and Kenya, that have showed financial literacy initiatives to be effective in generating savings and teaching more responsible economic behaviour (Banerjee, 2016; Kagotho, Ssewamala, Patak-Pietrafesa, & Byansi, 2018), indicating the potential positive relevance that financial literacy education initiatives may have in relation to South Africa's socio-economic challenges and social development paradigm.

Baring the aforementioned context in mind, this study aimed to establish a conceptual framework to aid in the understanding of social worker perceptions related to financial literacy education themes. This was done by contextualising key aspects related to South African poverty against literature pertaining to financial literacy education, both locally, and on a global scale, in order to sketch a clear picture of the relevance that financial literacy education might have as a potential poverty alleviation strategy in social development. Furthermore, an empirical study was conducted that investigated the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in social

development. Data was collected from eighteen participants via a semi-structured interview schedule before the findings were thoroughly analysed and presented in the previous chapter.

All the relevant objectives of the study were reached. The first objective, that pertains to the conceptualisation and contextualisation of poverty, vulnerable people, and social work within a social developmental paradigm in South Africa, based on a capabilities approach towards poverty alleviation, was attained in chapter two, by describing various aspects related to poverty in South Africa. The second objective regarded the analyses of the facilitation of financial literacy education initiatives in South African social work contexts, with a special focus on financial literacy education as a measure towards poverty alleviation. It was attained in chapter three by describing how the capabilities approach, financial literacy education programs, and social entrepreneurship impacts upon the South African social development and social work context. In chapter four, which is the empirical study, the objective relating to the empirical investigation of the perceptions of social workers regarding the role of financial literacy education in social development was attained by conducting, and analysing interviews. This chapter relates to the final objective of the study, which pertains to drawing conclusions and presenting recommendations to social workers, social work managers, social work organisations, and policy regulators regarding the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in social development.

5.2. Conclusions and recommendations

The researcher will draw conclusions from the findings of the empirical study, and subsequently present recommendations based on the conclusions. Since the objective of this chapter regards recommendations to multiple parties, the researcher will first present the conclusions related to the various individual themes and sub- themes below.

Then, upon the conclusion of all data related to the various sub-themes, the researcher will present conclusions and recommendations for the theme as a whole. These conclusions and recommendations will be a synthesised amalgamation of the information that emerged under each sub-theme in order to provide a well-rounded understanding of all the pertinent aspects related to each theme as a whole. Finally,

the categories related to the biographical information of the participants, such as their length of time as a social worker, the geography of the area where they render services, and the amount of cases in their caseload, alongside the adoption of the capabilities approach within a social development paradigm in instances where appropriate, will be utilised as the lens through which conclusions and recommendations will be conceptualised. To be noted is that the different contexts of social work participants (for example, rural or urban social workers and their number of years of experience as a social worker) are not to be compared, but are taken into consideration to assist the researcher in ensuring an adequate interpretation of the data collected. The category pertaining to the type of organisation where participants worked will not be discussed as this did not play a role in the findings and the interpretation of data.

5.2.1. Individual profile of participants

The participants that partook in the study varied quite extensively in terms of their identifying details related to their length as a social worker, the geographical area that they rendered services in, and the amount of cases in their caseload.

Regarding the length of time as a social worker, the biggest percentage of participants were relatively new to the field (zero to five years of practicing as a social worker), while the second largest category regarded experienced social workers (with more than sixteen years of experience in practice). There was a relatively even spread in terms of the geographical areas where services were rendered by the participants with the urban category possessing eight of the eighteen participants, and the semi-urban, and rural areas providing five participants each, respectively. Regarding the amount of cases in their caseloads, six participants indicated that they had between twenty-six and fifty cases. This category comprised the largest percentage of the four categories, with the second most-prevalent category being the category of seventy-five cases or more that contained five participants.

The section to follow will present conclusions as identified by sub-theme, before considering conclusions for theme one as a unit. Recommendations will be provided at the end of theme's section to link with the conclusions presented prior. Theme two will follow the same structure as theme one.

5.2.2. Theme 1: Profile of service users' financial literacy

The first theme of the study regards the profile of service users' financial literacy. Seven sub-themes were identified and conclusions for each sub-theme will be presented below. Each section will be discussed in relation to the two distinct lenses. The one lens pertains to the biographical indicators identified in the previous section, and thus, conclusions will be based on the participants' length of time as a social worker, the geographical area where services are rendered, and the amount of cases in their caseloads. The other lens regards the adoption of the capabilities approach as a conceptual point of departure. This will be applied in instances where the perspective adopted can be framed in terms of perceived service users' capability, functioning, or opportunity. Each section will be individually assessed and as such, may not include information of all the biographical indicators or a capabilities approach perspective, but the researcher will determine under which sections he will utilise which lenses, in accordance with the data that has been obtained.

5.2.2.1. Sub-theme 1: Main problems experienced by service users in caseload

The main problems that were identified by participants were substance abuse and issues of family disintegration. Below, there will be looked at the relationship that exists between financial literacy education and issues of substance abuse and family disintegration.

Across the board, substance abuse, unemployment, and family disintegration were identified as the main problems facing service users in the participants' caseloads. When considering that the same problems were identified by all the participants, a link between the three aforementioned phenomena is elucidated. Interestingly, all the problems identify relate to challenges that service users experience when living in poor socio-economic conditions, begging the question of environmental influence as a variable on the problems experienced by service users. This is stated as, if a service user is addicted to substances, it can contribute to issues of unemployment if they prioritise the consuming of substances above maintaining employment. Unemployment can also worsen the experienced effects of poor socio-economic circumstances as it can result in aspects such as cashflow drying up, which will increase the financial pressure experienced by service users. Unemployment and substance abuse can also perpetuate each other if substances are prioritised to

escape dire socio-economic conditions. Issues of substance abuse and unemployment can also contribute to family disintegration as they both can increase the experienced pressure of family members. Therefore, although three different phenomena were identified by participants, when considering the exposition presented above, they can be viewed as one entity, stemming from poor socio-economic circumstances.

Synthesised conclusion: The participant social workers' perceptions are that poor socio-economic conditions need to be addressed in tandem with service user financial illiteracy as poverty is multi-layered and requires a multitude of facets to be addressed in social development.

5.2.2.2. Sub-theme 2: Definitions of poverty

The second sub-theme regarded how participants conceptualised poverty with regards to their service users. Here, the majority of the participants indicated that the main indicators were service users having no, or little income (indicating a financial conceptualisation) while participants in the zero to five year work experience group also indicated that the mentality of living from "hand to mouth" (i.e. no future planning, or sense of longevity) also comprised part of their conceptualisation. With regards to the financial conceptualisation of poverty, the majority of participants indicated that a reliance on SASSA grants were utilised as a main factor in conceptualisation. When considering that social assistance grants are meant to be a form of economic support, rather than a sole income, a link between the mentality of living from "hand to mouth" and the reliance of grants emerges. As explained in the previous chapter, participants identified that the aforementioned mentality was generally characterised by issues of learned helplessness, a lack of responsibility taken for one's own situations, and a lack of future planning. Therefore, from the characteristics mentioned above, a clearer link emerges between the reliance on social grants and a mentality of living hand to mouth. This is stated as, if service users get accustomed to depending on grant money, it might impact upon their motivation to want to address their situations, as the mentality adopted might make them complacent if they have to do nothing to better their circumstances, and get rewarded for it with money every month (in the form of social assistance grants).

Synthesised conclusion: Perceptions of participants indicated that financial literacy intervention needs to include themes that highlight and address negative service user mentality and behaviour patterns, with a focus on their capabilities.

5.2.2.3. Sub-theme 3: Reasons for service user poverty

The third sub-theme related to the service users' financial literacy profile pertains to the perceived reasons regarding service user poverty. Here, a lack of education was cited as the most prevalent reason, while structural problems were regarded as the second most prevalent reason. Though the majority of the participants identified a lack of scholastic education as the largest reason, only the social workers who formed part of the more experienced group (those that have been social workers for sixteen or more years) noted towards structural issues as being a prevalent reason. As they have been practicing the longest out of the participant groups, it also means that they may have been practicing in and around the time that apartheid ended. If this rings true, it means that they have experience dealing with most pre- and post-apartheid welfare systems and can thus, reflect more clearly on the state of the current social development welfare system. Interestingly, it was determined that the most prevalent of the structural issues pertains to access to resources and quality education. Apparent from both key categories of answers, is that general scholastic education can be considered a vital aspect related to service user poverty. Therefore, ensuring that all populations (especially the more vulnerable and impoverished demographics) have access to quality education is paramount.

Synthesised conclusion: Participants identified that there need to be increased access to educational resources for all populations, with especial notice given to issues of quality education. This means that alongside inter- and intrapersonal resource stimulation, there needs to be a dedicated effort aimed at improving infrastructure and growing human capital in areas deemed as vulnerable or impoverished.

5.2.2.4. Sub-theme 4: Reasons for service users' over-indebtedness

The fourth sub-theme related to the profile of service users' financial literacy pertains to aspects that participants viewed as being integral in instances of service user over-indebtedness. Here, the majority of the participants indicated that over-indebtedness can be attributed to a lack of financial knowledge and skills, but the most extensive

caseload group (those social workers having seventy-five or more active cases in their caseload currently) also noted that client mentality also plays a big role. Specifically, they (the most extensive caseload group) indicated that the inability to prioritise was a large contributing factor in service user over-indebtedness. When considering that it was the group with the most extensive caseload that specifically pointed out the inability to prioritise as a key reason, further expositions emerge. There can be argued that the inability for service users to prioritise, can result in the perpetuation of situations of debt, and can contribute to the exhaustion of social assistance services. This is stated as, if service users cannot prioritise, it will most likely result in them engaging in economically self-detrimental behaviour patterns, which will lead to a steady increase in experienced financial stressors (which can result in the increase of other stressors as well). As service users then fall further and further into debt, their need for assistance from social service increases rapidly. The issue for service providers takes the form of service users constantly needing assistance, taking away time and resources that could be allocated to other vulnerable service users. Furthermore, if service providers are unable to assist service users in becoming self-sufficient, the need for assistance will always outweigh the perceived success stories.

Synthesised conclusion: From the data gathered it was indicated that financial literacy initiatives should view service users who are over-indebted as key focal points in intervention, as, if issues of debt can be resolved it can lead to major financial empowerment and generation of motivational success stories.

5.2.2.5. Sub-theme 5: Reasons for service users' financial illiteracy

All the participants indicated that a lack of financial knowledge and skills could be regarded as the most prevalent reason for service user financial illiteracy. Unsurprisingly, the participants who indicated that they work in rural settings especially stressed the lack of financial knowledge and skills as being paramount. This is stated as, rural areas tend to have less infrastructure and a lower accessibility to resources. Therefore, service users residing in rural areas can be identified as especially vulnerable, as it can be argued that the physical location of financial resources are often centred around urban-, rather than rural areas. When considering that building financial resources in rural areas may be expensive and time-consuming, there can be argued in favour of other methods that can be more time- and cost-effective. An example of such a method would be to help increase the technological literacy

(alongside aspects of financial literacy) of service users, as being technologically competent will allow them to engage with financial resources in an easier manner. This is stated as many financial institutions (such as retail banks for example) have applications that can be utilised on mobile phones. These applications often have the capability to help users conduct and navigate a variety of financial resources, such as drawing up budgeting plans, starting a savings plan, or conducting payments electronically.

Synthesised conclusion: The study found that technology could be a useful tool to employ when conceptualising and applying financial literacy education initiatives as it can help geographically isolated service users (in more rural areas) to engage with financial resources.

5.2.2.6. Sub-theme 6: Reasons to educate services users to be more financially literate

The penultimate sub-theme related to the profile of service users' financial literacy regards pertinent reasons why service users should be educated to be more financially literate. All the participants indicated that if service users are financially literate, it can lead to them taking a greater sense of control over their lives via empowering them economically, which is an inherent goal of social development. The social workers from the more experienced group (those that have been practicing for sixteen years or more) also indicated that empowering service users financially can have a positive impact on family systems (in the form of improved mentality and behaviour patterns) if service users apply the knowledge and skills that the initiatives taught them. The fact that it was the more experienced group that noted the aforementioned, indicates an increased perceived value of the potential positive capability aspects that adequate application of financial literacy initiatives may have. This viewpoint can also be interpreted as the participants echoing the need for financial literacy education initiatives to be explored as a potential buffer against poor socio-economic circumstances. The less experienced group (social workers who have been practicing for five years or less) indicated that if service users can be empowered economically, the potential for lifting themselves out of poverty also exists, indicating further potential benefits for the financial literacy education of service users.

Synthesised conclusion: All participants indicated that financial literacy education initiatives can have huge value in the lives of service users that are struggling in poor socio-economic circumstances. It is also crucial to assist service users to empower themselves economically, so that they can attain a better sense of economic control over their lives.

5.2.2.7. Sub-theme 7: Pertinent aspects of service users' financial literacy education

The final sub-theme related to the theme that regards the financial literacy profile of service users, is pertinent aspects that should be focused on in financial literacy education initiatives. A consensus was reached by all participants by indicating that learning basic financial knowledge and skills, in the form of budgeting, understanding the reason for budgeting, and prioritisation, could be regarded as pertinent themes of departure in financial literacy education initiatives. The fact that all participants stressed the importance of the basics of household finances, provides insight pertaining to potential starting points for the initiatives. It also helps paint a picture regarding the necessity of financial literacy intervention, as aspects of basic household finances (such as for example, budgeting) is often a theme that many people take for granted and as obvious. By assisting service users in learning the basics of finances, service providers should ensure that the knowledge and skills that form part of "the basics" can help service users to establish a solid financial foundation. If this can be achieved the possibility exists that service users may find it easier to learn and understand other concepts related to household finances, which in turn can also assist them in breaking or changing negative lifestyle patterns and mentalities.

Synthesised conclusion: The perceptions of the participants indicated that financial literacy education initiatives should include an assessment phase, prior to the start of general social work intervention, to determine what the service user's level of financial literacy is. Initiatives can then be categorised according to themes or literacy levels to help ensure that all phases of financial literacy intervention processes are structured and standardised (as this will help ensure uniformity in the quality of interventions presented, regardless of who they are rendered to).

5.2.3. Overarching conclusions regarding theme 1: Profile of service users' financial literacy

The section to follow will compound the various conclusions of the sub-themes discussed above into one discussion to attempt to attain a synthesis between the various parts of the theme as a whole.

As apparent from the conclusions presented above, the profile of service users' financial literacy is more complex and multi-faceted than the researcher initially anticipated. Therefore, regardless of which role-players are to be involved in financial literacy education initiatives, the study has revealed that sufficient planning and conceptualisation would be required to address the various key conclusions that have emerged. As a point of departure, financial literacy education initiatives would need to accept that the best approach would be a holistic, multi-disciplinary approach as poverty is a multi-layered phenomenon in social development. It is important to note that, financial literacy in itself is not the be-all and end-all in efforts in poverty eradication. Rather, it should be viewed as a vehicle aimed at stimulating instances of sustainable social development, as an antecedent against poverty and poor socio-economic circumstances.

Bearing the aforementioned in mind, the researcher will now present the overarching conclusions, as identified in accordance with the first theme.

- Due to the nature of poverty, financial literacy education initiatives would need to be holistic (by considering the impact of aspects such as service user mentality on their perceived circumstances) and collaborative in nature (engagement between role-players in social development can lead to increased access to resources and a larger scope for the initiatives)
- For many service users who struggle with poverty, access to resources is a challenge, and thus, financial literacy education can include aspects of technological literacy as an effort to combat issues of accessibility.
- One of the biggest hindrances to service user financial sustainability is debt. Therefore, financial literacy education initiatives need to prioritise the relieving of client debt as a key aspect.
- Financial literacy interventions need to be structured to ensure that uniformity regarding the quality of services is guaranteed.

5.2.4. Overarching recommendations regarding theme 1: Profile of service users' financial literacy

In accordance with the overarching conclusions presented above, the researcher will now formulate recommendations related to the profile of service users' financial literacy, as in accordance with the final objective presented by the study. The aforementioned objective regards presenting recommendations to frontline social workers, social work organisations (public- and private formats) and policy regulators (which in the context of the study, regards bodies such as the national- and provincial departments of social development, NGO's, the SACSSP, and schools of social work), and as such, the structure of this section will follow that format as well.

5.2.4.1. Recommendations for social workers

- A larger focus needs to be attributed to social work interventions actively aimed at poverty alleviation efforts in social work within a social development paradigm.
- Addressing issues of debt by social workers may prove to be the most valuable point of departure for financial literacy education initiatives.
- Social workers need to increase their own level of financial knowledge and skills to ensure that they are able to assist service users with financial literacy interventions.
- Actively advocating by social workers to ensure that all communities have access to financial resources will aid financial literacy intervention and social development greatly.

5.2.4.2. Recommendations for social work organisations

- Partnership between social development organisations and financial role-players are key to increase the effectiveness and scope of financial literacy education initiatives.
- Adopting financial literacy education as a key focal point in poverty-focused social work service delivery may prove useful in better addressing the socio-economic challenges faced by service users (as many of the challenges are financial in nature).
- Financial education of service users experiencing poverty should be prioritised by organisations, with specific programmes to address aspects such as

budgeting, generating savings, and how to assist service users in navigating debt landscapes appropriately, being key.

- Organisations should actively advocate for all communities to have access to financial resources, which will aid financial literacy intervention greatly.

5.2.4.3. Recommendations for policy regulators

- Financial literacy education should be given more attention as a potential poverty alleviation strategy on all levels, highlighting the importance to increased national discourses related to the operationalisation of financial literacy education initiatives via the vehicle of social entrepreneurship (for service users) or social enterprise (for role-players).
- Applications of financial literacy education in the global arena (in countries with similar socio-economic problems as South Africa) have been successful, indicating a need to draw and learn from international instances of financial literacy education applications.
- Passing legislature that mandates the application of social responsibility in the form of business communities (and other financial role-players) engaging with financial literacy education initiatives may prove vital in the effective facilitation of the aforementioned initiatives.
- Actively regulating by policy regulators to ensure that all communities have access to financial resources will aid financial literacy intervention greatly, as it can result in an increased sense of capability in service users, if they are able to engage independently with financial resources.

5.2.5. Theme 2: The role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education

The second main theme that was identified in the study regards the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education. The seven subsequent sub-themes that emerged in relation to this theme are interventions utilised when educating service users, pertinent role-players to be involved in financial literacy education, key factors in the operationalisation of financial literacy endeavours, the role of social workers in the financial literacy process, challenges regarding financial literacy education, boons to aid in the facilitation, and financial literacy as contributor towards social development and efforts of poverty alleviation. As with theme one, the same structure will be followed where the sub-themes are discussed via the appropriately determined

lens of participants' biographical context and a capabilities approach as conceptual framework.

5.2.5.1. Sub-theme 1: Interventions utilised when educating service users regarding financial literacy education

The first sub-theme, that was identified in relation to the theme of the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education, regards the interventions utilised when educating service users in terms of financial literacy education. Overwhelmingly, all participants indicated that the facilitation of financial trainings sessions was the most appropriate intervention to utilise. They indicated that group- and individual sessions may be the best formats when engaging in intervention related to financial literacy. If considering the two aforementioned approaches to intervention, potential benefits to their implementation arise. Group work methods can be useful as they provide the potential for service users to engage not only with the material of the programmes, but also with other service users who may be experiencing similar difficulties as they are. This provides the opportunity for service users to build confidence, by depending one another as group members, and may also increase their motivation to continue engaging with financial literacy initiatives when they experience success stories, either of their own, or of other group members. Individual sessions may prove useful as some service users may be shy or embarrassed about their finances, which can make the safety of a confidential individual session appealing. Furthermore, since individual sessions just entail interaction between the service user and the social worker, it can also allow for specific planning to adopt the programmes' material to the situation of the service user.

Synthesised conclusion: Participants indicated that group- and individual sessions were deemed as the most appropriate methods for conducting financial literacy training with service users.

5.2.5.2. Sub-theme 2: Pertinent role-players to be involved in financial literacy education

The second sub-theme that relates to the second main theme was identified as the pertinent role-players that need to be involved in financial literacy education of service users. Here, though all participants indicated that a multi-disciplinary approach would be necessary for the adequate facilitation of financial literacy initiatives, there was

some differences regarding which role-players were considered as crucial. Participants who render services in an urban area predominantly indicated that schools should be utilised as a key role-player. When considering schools as a key role-player, several potential benefits emerge. Schools have a large reach in terms of service users, which can aid in increasing the scope of financial literacy initiatives. If financial literacy education can be implemented at schools from an early grade, it also provides the opportunity for children to learn financial knowledge and skills from a young age, meaning that positive financial behaviour can be instilled and cultivated before other behavioural patterns may have been developed. Interestingly, since the participants working in an urban area (as opposed to the other areas) predominantly indicated that schools can be a useful vessel, it can also point to a perceived increased quality of schooling institutions in urban areas, indicating that schools as platforms for the facilitation of financial literacy education initiatives, can be a powerful resource.

Regarding participants that render services in semi-urban, and rural areas, they largely indicated that the Department of Social Development and the business community would need to be involved as key role-players. Social entrepreneurship and social enterprise could also be considered as a powerful strategy aimed at service users' financial empowerment to apply as outcomes of financial literacy education in rural, or semi-urban areas. This is stated as, if service users are able to be economically independent, it can lead to less reliance on non-sustainable forms of economic support (such as social assistance grants) and increased capital at their disposal each month. Apparent from these views', is that there is a need for government to be involved, as well as the private sector. If the Department of Social Development can be involved in financial literacy endeavours, it can lead to an increased scope (as they have offices all over South Africa) and potential opportunities to engage with other governmental agencies or bodies if the implementation of financial literacy programmes go well. An increased engagement with government bodies can also lead to increased awareness and funds, if the department can recognise financial literacy as a valid, and necessary intervention programme. When considering that the participants who worked in rural areas identified the business community as a crucial role-player, it could point to the fact there is a need for more private sector-community engagement in rural areas. If service users and service providers in rural areas can be linked with the business

community's role-players and resources, a great possibility exists that the quality, and accessibility of services can greatly increase.

Synthesised conclusion: The perceptions of the participants elucidated that schools, the Department of Social Development and business communities associated with the private sector are deemed as the most important role-players to work alongside social workers in facilitating financial literacy education.

5.2.5.3. Sub-theme 3: Key factors in the operationalisation of financial literacy endeavours

The third sub-theme that was identified in relation to the second main theme pertains to what the participants' thought would be appropriate ways to operationalise financial literacy initiatives. Here, participants indicated that similar role-players as discussed above would be appropriate, while putting emphasis on community work, awareness campaigns, and school curriculums as key aspects. Community work and awareness campaigns can go hand-in-hand if the community members and community leaders can buy-into the initiatives. If one can get community leaders on board, it may also result in an increase of awareness, and interest in the programmes as service users might be more willing to engage with platforms and resources that they trust. If role-players can find ways to fuse financial literacy education with school curriculums, it can result in many youths being exposed to positive financial knowledge and behaviours from an early age (which can help establish and reinforce positive mentalities and patterns). The importance of stimulating instances of social entrepreneurship among youth (from an early age) was stressed. If social entrepreneurship can be utilised as a pertinent theme in financial literacy education, it can lead not only to the increase in financial knowledge and skills but can also encourage working towards financial independency. Should service users attain greater levels of financial independency, it can result in them having more freedom of opportunity to live in a way that they deem valuable. This directly links to the conceptual framework of a capabilities approach towards financial literacy education. In order for financial literacy education to be incorporated in school curriculums however, a few considerations would need to be met. Firstly, the programmes will need to be structured in a way that presents uniformity of content (to ensure that all children receive the same quality financial literacy education), while also having adaptable or interchangeable parts that will allow the programs to be changed for the

intended target audience (perhaps in the form of different levels of the program, for e.g. the first level regards basics like budgeting, while the fifth level might regard interest rates or debt). To be considered however, is the way in which it will be made part of the school curriculum – the Department of Education would need to be involved and buy-in into the initiatives.

Synthesised conclusion: Data collected from the participants indicated that community work and awareness campaigns may be integral in building rapport with target audiences. The youth was identified as a key target audience and curriculums of schools were indicated as a prime resource for the operationalisation of financial literacy education.

5.2.5.4. Sub-theme 4: Role of social workers regarding financial literacy education

The fourth sub-theme related to the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education with regards to the specific role that participants felt social workers had to adopt. Here, participants seemed to struggle to find a uniform consensus. From the viewpoints that emerged, it was identified that facilitating financial training alongside financial professionals and adopting an enabler role are the most crucial roles for social workers to adopt. When considering that social workers generally tend to have good communication and interpersonal skills, it makes sense for them to facilitate the process and content of financial literacy education alongside financial professionals. This is stated as, social workers can assist both service users and the financial professionals, by facilitating effective communication and the building of trust between the parties to ensure that the process can operate unhindered. In doing so, the social worker's role as an agent of empowerment is also reflected. Regarding the adoption of an enabler role, it was explained that social workers should utilise their professional networks and contacts to ensure that the service users have continuous opportunities of accessibility to financial instruments and institutions, whether in the sessions, or outside the sessions. Should accessibility be increased, the potential also exists that service users can continue to engage with financial literacy education initiatives, even outside of social work intervention, which can result in sustainability and increased motivation and capabilities on the service users' part.

Synthesised conclusion: Participants' perceptions indicated that the role of a facilitator and enabler were deemed to be the most appropriate roles for social workers to adopt in the process of financial literacy education.

5.2.5.5. Sub-theme 5: Challenges regarding financial literacy education

The fifth sub-theme with regards to the theme of the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education was identified as challenges that may hinder the process of financial literacy education service provision. Though participants identified a variety of different challenges, challenges related to the mentality of service users and time management of social workers appeared most frequently. Both the newer social workers (who have been practicing for five years or less), as well as the more experienced social workers (who have been practicing for sixteen years or more) indicated that client mentality can be a challenge. Due to the fact that both parties indicated client mentality as a prime concern, one can argue that the amount of years that they have been working, did not impact upon their perceptions to identify mentality as a key challenge (as the more experienced social workers still saw this as a problem even after years in practice). Therefore, identifying service user mentality as a key challenge, indicates the need for other professionals to be involved in the process (in this case, for e.g. a psychologist may be useful). If there are challenges that hinder the service users' motivation to engage and their ability to apply the appropriate financial knowledge and skills to their situations, it can result in the initiatives being ineffective. It is therefore imperative that financial literacy education initiatives contain a holistic approach that deems aspects associated with the experienced socio-economic circumstances of service users, as a key focal point. Furthermore, regarding the challenge of time management, social workers and social work organisations should aim to deliberately place a greater emphasis on financial literacy programmes as a concrete way to give effect to the objectives of social development. Though this will come at the expense of other areas of intervention, if financial literacy can be successful on a large scale, it may lead to caseloads decreasing as service users' capabilities' in financial literacy may increase. To be noted however, is that the development towards increased capabilities aimed at achieving change, and especially sustainable change, takes time, which emphasises the need for financial literacy initiatives to be well-planned and conceptualised to ensure maximum potential efficiency when implemented. Most importantly, the participants' perceptions point to

the fact that the development of service users' financial capabilities, can never take the form of a "once size fits all" approach. Financial education, as in all social work interventions, should be individualised according to the needs of the service users.

Synthesised conclusion: The participants' most pertinent perceptions regarding sub-theme five entailed that financial literacy education initiatives need to include holistic approaches to develop the service users' financial capabilities and socio- economic circumstances. Financial literacy initiatives need to be recognised as a key focal point for generic social work service delivery in social development and need to be appropriately planned and conceptualised to aid in its effective implementation. Most importantly, financial literacy education programmes focussed on the development of financial capabilities, should be tailored to fit service users' individual needs and challenges.

5.2.5.6. Sub-theme 6: Boons to aid in the facilitation of financial literacy education

The penultimate sub-theme of theme two regards the opposite to the theme discussed above. It pertains to boons that can aid the process of facilitating financial literacy education. Here, participants identified that the aspect of building trust with the target audience of recipients was the most crucial boon to aid in the facilitation of financial literacy initiatives. The majority of the participants indicated that, in order for service users to be motivated to effectively engage in service delivery, they would need to trust the role-players and the process involved. To systematically increase trust, it is crucial that role-players build a relationship with the service users. Perhaps in these initial stages, the process can involve assessment and the addressing of factors that may hinder the service users' engagement with the financial literacy process. This indicates that, in order for service users to effectively engage with financial aspects, issues surrounding their ability to engage with the process (for e.g. poor socio- economic circumstances that results in interpersonal stressors) need to be addressed prior, or in tandem with their financial education. This holistic approach may be a prerequisite for the development of service users' financial capabilities. Participants also indicated that success stories might be a powerful tool in reaching and engaging a larger target audience. This is stated as, if service users share their personal success and capabilities with other service users, it can result in them being more motivated and willing to continue engaging in the process. Success stories and capabilities of

service users can, therefore, also be viewed as a tool, and should be promoted and emphasised throughout the process of financial literacy education.

Synthesised conclusion: The participants' perceptions highlighted that it is imperative for service users to trust the role-players and the financial literacy education process, if effective engagement is to take place. Service users' success stories and sharing of their capabilities may be a useful tool for increasing trust.

5.2.5.7. Sub-theme 7: Financial literacy education as contributor towards poverty alleviation and social development

The final sub-theme related to the theme that pertains to the role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education, regards whether financial literacy education can act as a contributing factor towards poverty alleviation efforts and social development. Overwhelmingly, all the participants indicated that financial literacy education could definitely contribute towards poverty alleviation and social development. Though voiced differently, all the participants' accounts of their perceptions indicated that the financial empowerment of service users can lead to them taking better control over their lives and result in them systematically lifting themselves from poverty, overtime. When considering that the development of service users' financial capabilities was indicated as a keyway in which financial literacy education could contribute towards social development, the importance of social entrepreneurship was highlighted again. This is stated as since social entrepreneurship can be utilised as a medium through which service users can increase their financial capabilities. Important to note however, is that instances of social entrepreneurship would be more suitable for service users who have demonstrated they have the ability to apply the knowledge and skills taught under financial literacy education in a consistent manner (as one would need to be comfortable in navigating personal finance aspects, before aspects of business finance should be considered). Apparent from the participants' perceptions, is that most service users who are experiencing poor socio-economic circumstances are often plagued by issues where their expenses exceed their income (such as for e.g. debt or being reliant on grants). If then, social work service delivery can assist them in generating additional avenues of revenue, and developing their capabilities to better manage their finances, it can result in them having more money at their disposal. If service users can consistently work towards an increased capital base, it can lead to financial empowerment as they will reach a point where they can

restore a sense of financial equilibrium to their socio-economic circumstances, ultimately resulting in less experienced stressors. Thus, if service users are able to continuously better their own financial standing, it can also be viewed as reaching the objectives of social development, as social development includes human- and economic development.

Synthesised conclusion: Participants' perceptions point to the direct link between the capabilities approach and financial literacy education as a contributory factor towards poverty alleviation and social development by economically empowering service users to take better control over their lives, thereby directly increasing their experienced sense of capability, opportunity, and functioning.

5.2.6. Overarching conclusion regarding theme 2: The role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education

As was conducted in theme one, this section will compound the subsequent sub-themes' conclusions into a discussion to attain a synthesis in terms of the theme as a whole.

As apparent from the conclusions presented above, the role of social work in the facilitation of financial literacy education initiatives is multi-faceted. Crucially, it is to be noted that even though the theme regards the role of social work, social work as a profession alone, will be insufficient for the adequate implementation. Though a key role-player in social development, the profession of social work would need to be assisted by other professions for maximum effect.

As such, the researcher will now present the overarching conclusions for theme two, as identified.

- Generic social work intervention methods such as individual-, group-, and community work can all be effective mediums for the facilitation of financial literacy education initiatives.
- The role of facilitator and enabler were identified as key roles for social workers to adopt during the process of service user financial capabilities' development.
- Schools, the Department of Social Development, and the business communities of the private sector were identified as key role-players for the effective implementation of financial literacy education.

- Financial literacy interventions need to be holistic to address both issues of finances, and psychosocial issues related to poor socio-economic circumstances.
- The development of service users' financial capabilities is not a once-off and "once size fit all" event. It is a process as part of generalist social work intervention.
- Financial literacy can contribute towards poverty alleviation and social development if service users are enabled to consistently take better economic control over their lives, indicating the appropriateness of the incorporation of aspects of social entrepreneurship.

5.2.7. Recommendations regarding theme 2: The role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education

As with theme one, the researcher will now draw recommendations from the overarching conclusions presented above. This will be done to further link to the final objective of the study that entails presenting recommendations to social workers, social work organisations (which entails public- and private organisations), and policy regulators (in the instances of this study, this regards parties such as national-, and provincial departments of social development, NGO's, the SACSSP, and schools of social work).

5.2.7.1. Recommendations for social workers

- Linking service users with the appropriate financial networks can enhance service user capability by putting them (the service users) in a position to access applicable financial resources.
- When facilitating financial literacy, it is imperative that measures be taken to assess and address challenges that can impede service users' willingness to engage in financial literacy programmes, that are not financial in nature, but still associated with poor socio-economic circumstances (for e.g. issues of domestic violence)
- There needs to be a greater sense of awareness raised around financial literacy and its importance to get other role-players on board, and to elucidate the need for social enterprise as a means of engaging cross-sectoral role-players, to be utilised.

- The development of service users' financial capabilities should be integrated in all social work interventions in order to reach the objectives of social development.

5.2.7.2. Recommendations for social work organisations

- Organisations should aim to band together with one-another and other role-players to increase the scope of engagement.
- Organisations need to ensure that their social workers who are engaging in financial literacy endeavours are adequately financially educated and thus should add financial literacy education as a means of staff development to their usual organisational structures and processes.
- Financial literacy programs that are utilised need to be adequately conceptualised and planned to ensure relevancy, and must not be seen as once-off, standardised events, but should be based on the needs of service users and should be part of a social work process.

5.2.7.3. Recommendations for policy regulators

- There needs to be a larger focus nationwide on the importance and value of financial literacy education in policy documents pertaining to social work service delivery.
- Financial literacy education must be made an integrated key national focus regarding efforts of poverty alleviation and social development.
- Policy frameworks regarding the engagement of social work and other sectors in financial literacy education endeavours should be seen as one of the objectives of social development.
- Financial literacy education should be added to the undergraduate social work curriculum of social work students in South Africa (in terms of core knowledge and standards), with special emphasis on aspects such as social entrepreneurship and basic financial literacy concepts such as budgeting, generation of savings, and helping service users to navigate problematic situations of debt.
- Social development service providers should aim to develop and implement opportunities for continuous professional development (CPD) to assist social

workers and social work organisations with the upscaling of their knowledge and skills associated with financial literacy education.

5.3. Key findings and recommendations for future research

This research study was aimed at understanding the perceptions of social workers regarding the role of financial literacy education in social development. The study aimed to attain the aforementioned by conceptualising poverty within a social developmental paradigm, before analysing the state of financial literacy education initiatives in South Africa. The empirical investigation's key findings indicated that: (i) financial literacy education initiatives need to be holistic since challenges associated with poor economic circumstances may hinder client motivation and engagement levels; (ii) increasing service user accessibility to financial resources is imperative by establishing and linking them with a network of resources; (iii) multiple role-players in social development would be necessary to adequately implement financial literacy education initiatives; and (iv) debt is a crucial challenge that needs to be a key focal point in financial literacy as a poverty alleviation initiative. Therefore, it is imperative that future research explore the following:

- A qualitative study aimed at assessing the nature and dynamics of relationships between the required role-players in the development of social work service users' financial capabilities, and if non-existent, how to establish and maintain effective multi-disciplinary relationships for sustainable financial literacy education.
- A quantitative study assessing the availability of financial resources in social work service users' varying geographical areas, and to determine ways in which financial networks and resources can be increased and improved by social development professionals.
- A major study to determine the components and content of financial social work within the South African social development paradigm, with the aim to develop standards to be included in the training of social work students and continues professional development of social workers.

Reference List

- Aalbers, M.B. 2019. Financialization. In Richardson, D., Castree, N., Goodchild, M.F., Kobayashi, A.L., Liu, W., & Marston, R.A. (eds.). *The international encyclopaedia of geography: People, the Earth, environment, and technology*. United Kingdom: Wiley.
- Ali, A., Hawkins, R.L., & Chambers, D.A. 2010. Recovery from depression among clients transitioning out of poverty. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 80(1): 26–33.
- Bacq, S., & Janssen, F. 2011. The multiple faces of social entrepreneurship: A review of definitional issues based on geographical and thematic criteria. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 23(5–6): 373–403.
- Banerjee, M.M. 2015. Applying Sen's capability approach to understand work and income among poor people in India. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, XLII(3): 87–112.
- Banerjee, M.M. 2016. "We routinely borrow to survive": Exploring the financial capabilities of income-poor people in India. *Social work*, 61(4): 349–358.
- Becchetti, L., & Borzaga, C. 2010. Introduction. In Becchetti, L., & Borgaza, C. (eds.). *The economics of social responsibility. The world of social enterprise*. United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Begon, J. 2017. Capabilities for all? Capabilities to function, to capabilities to control. *Social Theory and Practice*, 43(1): 154–179.
- Berger, R. 2015. Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 15(2): 219–234.
- Birkenmaier, J.M., Callahan, C., Sherraden, M.S., McClendon, G., & Huang, J. 2020. Preparing social work students and practitioners for financial social work. In Callahan, C., Frey, J.J., & Imboden, R. (eds.). *The Routledge handbook on financial social work: Direct practice with vulnerable populations*. New York: Routledge.
- Birkenmaier, J.M., Loke, V., & Hageman, S.A. 2016. Are graduating students ready for financial aspects of social work practice? *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 36(5): 519–536.

- Birkenmaier, J.M., Sherraden, M.S., Frey, J.J., Callahan, C., Santiago, A.M. 2018. *Financial capability and asset building with diverse populations: Improving financial well-being in families and communities*. United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Blaikie, N. 2000. *Designing social research: the logic of anticipation*. Massachusetts: Blackwell.
- Bloor, M., & Wood, F. 2006. *Keywords in qualitative methods: A vocabulary of research concepts*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Bohlman, H.R. 2010. *The macroeconomic impact of skilled emigration from South Africa: a CGE analysis*. Melbourne: Centre of Policy Studies, Monash University.
- Boyadjieva, P., & Ilieva-Trichkova, P. 2018. Adult education as a common good: conceptualisation and measurement. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 37(3): 345–358.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2): 77–101.
- Breier, M. & Erasmus, J. 2009. *Skills shortages in South Africa: Case study of key professions*. Cape Town: HSRC, South Africa.
- Bruhn, M., de Sousa Leao, L., Legovini, A., Marchetti, R., & Zia, B. 2013. The impact of high school financial education: Experimental evidence from Brazil. *Working Paper No. 6723*. Washington D.C.: World Bank Policy Research.
- Callahan, C., Frey, J.J., & Imboden, R. 2020. Overview of interventions. In Callahan, C., Frey, J.J., & Imboden, R. (eds.). *The Routledge handbook on financial social work: Direct practice with vulnerable populations*. New York: Routledge.
- Caplan, M.A. 2014. Communities respond to predatory lending. *Social Work*, 59(2): 149–156.
- Carlson, J.A. 2010. Avoiding traps in member checking. *Qualitative Report*, 15(5): 1102–1113.
- Chakraborty, N.M., Fry, K., Behl, R., & Longfield, K. 2016. Simplified asset indices to measure wealth and equity in health programs: A reliability and validity analysis using survey data from 16 countries. *Global Health: Science and Practice*, 4(1): 141–154.

- Cheng, L.C. 2019. Policy innovation and policy realisation: The example of children future education and development accounts in Taiwan. *Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work and Development*, 29(1): 48–58.
- Cho, J., & Kogan, M.S. 2016. Risk and protective processes predicting rural African-American young men's substance abuse. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 58(3/4): 422–433.
- Chopra, T. 2010. Bank with a conscious. *Alternatives Journal*, 36(2): 16.
- Cope, D.G. 2014. Methods and meanings: Credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 41(1): 89–91.
- Council for Social Work Education, 2017. *Curricular guide for economic well-being practice*. Alexandria: Council for Social Work Education.
- Curtin, M., & Fossey, E. 2007. Appraising the trustworthiness of qualitative studies: Guidelines for occupational therapists. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 54(2): 88–94.
- Dacin, T.M., Dacin, P.A., & Tracey, P. 2011. Social entrepreneurship: A critique and future directions. *Organization Science*, 22(5): 1203–1213.
- Daniels, R.C., Partridge, A., Kekana, D., & Musundwa, S. 2013. Rural livelihoods in South Africa. *SALDRU Working Paper No. 122/NIDS Discussion Paper*. Southern Africa Labour and Developmental Research Unit: University of Cape Town.
- De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouche, C.B., & Delport, C.S.L. 2011. *Research at grass roots*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Deakin, H., & Wakefield, K. 2014. Skype interviewing: Reflections of two PhD researchers. *Qualitative Research*, 14(5): 603–616.
- DeJaeghere, J. 2013. Education, skills and citizenship: an emergent model for entrepreneurship in Tanzania. *Comparative Education*, 49(4): 503–519.
- Despard, M., & Chowa, G.A.N. 2012. Personal finance problems: Opportunities for social work interventions? *Journal of Social Service Research*, 38(3): 342–350.
- Doudich, M., Ezrari, A., Van der Weide, R., & Verme, P. 2015. Estimating quarterly poverty rates using labour force surveys: A primer. *The World Bank Economic Review*, 30(3): 475–500.

- Drever, A.I., Otters-White, E., Kalish, C.W., Else-Quest, N.M., Hoagland, E.M., Nells, E.M. 2015. Foundations of financial well-being: Insights into the role of executive function, financial socialisation, and experience-based learning in childhood and youth. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 49(1): 13–38.
- Edigheji, O. 2010. Developing the developmental state. *HSRC Review*, 8(1): 14–16.
- Engelbrecht, L.K. 2006. Plumbing the brain drain of South African social workers migrating to the UK: Challenges for social service providers. *Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk*, 42(2): 127–146.
- Engelbrecht, L.K. 2008a. Economic literacy and the war on poverty: A social work challenge? *International journal of social welfare*, 17(2): 166–173.
- Engelbrecht, L.K. 2008b. Financial literacy education within a developmental social work paradigm. *The social work practitioner-researcher*, 20(1): 1–18.
- Engelbrecht, L.K. 2008c. The scope of financial literacy education: A poverty alleviation tool in social work? *Social work/Maatskaplike werk*, 44(3): 252–262.
- Engelbrecht, L.K. 2009. Indebtedness of financial vulnerable households: What do social workers do? *Social work/Maatskaplike werk*, 45(2): 111–127.
- Engelbrecht, L.K. 2011. The global financial crisis: Response of social workers to the financial capability of vulnerable households in South Africa. *Journal of social intervention: theory and practice*, 20(2): 41–53.
- Engelbrecht, L.K. 2015. An integrative review of community education to facilitate financial capabilities of vulnerable households. In Pulla, V., & Mamidi, B.B. (eds.). *Some aspects of community empowerment and resilience*. New Delhi: Allied Publishers.
- Engelbrecht, L.K., & Ornellas, A. 2019. Financial capabilities development: Essential discourse in social work. *International Journal of Social Economics*, 46(10): 1234–1246.
- European Commission. 2013. *Adult and continuing education in Europe: Pathways for a skill growth governance*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

- Farooq, M.B., & De Villiers, C. 2017. Telephonic qualitative research interviews, when to consider them and how to do them. *Meditari Accountancy Research*, 25(2): 291–316.
- Feehan, D.M., Feit, M.D., & Bekker, C. 2013. Community, economic, and social development in a changing world. In Weil, M., Reisch, M., & Ohmer, M.L. (eds.). *The handbook of community practice*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Fernandes, D., Lynch, J.G., & Netemeyer, R.G. 2014. Financial literacy, financial education, and downstream behaviours. *Management Science*, 60(8): 1861–1883.
- Fertig, M. 2012. Educational leadership and the capabilities approach: Evidence from Ghana. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 42(3): 391–408.
- Finfgeld-Connett, D., Bloom, T.L. & Johnson, E. 2012. Perceived competency and resolution of homelessness among women with substance abuse problems. *Qualitative Health Research*, 22(3): 416–417.
- Fisher, A. 2013. *Young Emiratis must become entrepreneurs*. Available: http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=data/nationgeneral/2013/February/nationgeneral_February205.xml§ion=nationgeneral [Accessed 21 December 2019].
- Fitzsimmons, E., Goodman, A., Kelly, E., & Smith, J.P. 2017. Poverty dynamics and parental mental health: Determinants of child mental health in the UK. *Social Science and Medicine*, 175: 43–51.
- Fox, J.J., Bartholomae, S., & Trombitas, K.S. 2012. Evaluating Financial Education Programs. In Durband, D.B., & Britt, S.L. (eds.). *Student financial literacy. Campus-based program development*. New York: Springer.
- Foyer, M. 2000. *Debt and democracy: the freedom to exploit*. Report for Black Sash. Unpublished paper.
- Frey, J.J., Hopkins, K., Osteem, P., Callahan, C., Hageman, S., & Ko, J. 2017. Training social workers and human service professionals to address the complex financial needs of clients. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 53(1): 118–131.
- Frey, J.J., Svoboda, D., Sander, R., Osteem, P., Callahan, C., & Elkinson, A. 2015. Evaluation of a continuing education training on client financial capability. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 53(1): 439–456.

- Garcia, M.J.R. 2011. Financial education and behavioural finance: New insights into the role of information in financial decisions. *Journal of Economic Surveys*, 27(2): 297–315.
- Gates, L.B., Koza, J., & Akabas, S.H. 2017. Social work's response to poverty: From benefits dependence to economic self-sufficiency. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 53(1): 99–117.
- Gilgun, J.F. 2006. Commentary: On Susan Smith: Encouraging the use of reflexivity in the writing up of qualitative research. *International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation*, 13(5): 215.
- Gilgun, J.F. 2006. Commentary: On Susan Smith: Encouraging the use of reflexivity in the writing up of qualitative research. *International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation*, 13(5): 215.
- Given, L.M. 2008. *The SAGE encyclopaedia of qualitative research methods*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Goodman, L.A., Pugach, M., Skolnik, A., & Smith, L. 2013. Poverty and mental health practice: within and beyond the 50-Minute Hour. *Journal of Clinical Psychology: In Session*, 69(2): 180–190.
- Goodwin-Groen, R.P., & Kelly-Louw, M. 2006. *The National Credit Act and its regulations in the context of access to finance in South Africa*. Marshalltown: FinMark Trust.
- Gordon Institute of Business Science. 2019. *Why social entrepreneurship in South Africa?* Available: <https://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/713/189610.html> [Accessed 27 December 2019].
- Gray, M. 2006. The progress of social development in South Africa. *International journal of social welfare*, 15(S1): S53-S64.
- Green, G.P., & Haines, A. 2012. Financial capital. In *Asset building and community development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Grymonprez, H., Roose, R., & Roets, G. 2017. Outreach social work: From managing access to practices of accessibility. *European Journal of Social Work*, 20(4): 461–471.

- Guest, G., Namey, E.E., & Mitchell, M.L. 2013. *Collective qualitative data: A field manual for applied research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Gutter, M.S., & Renner, C. 2007. Measuring the impact of a financial education curriculum on student attitudes and behaviour. In *Final Evaluation Report*. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin.
- Hageman, S.A., Sherraden, M., Birkenmaier, J.M., & Loke, V. 2019. Economic and financial well-being in the social work curriculum: Faculty perspectives. *Journal of Social Work Education*: 1–13.
- Hanandita, W., & Tampubolon, G. 2014. Does poverty reduce mental health? An instrumental variable analysis. *Social Science and Medicine*, 113: 59–67.
- Hartgenn, K., Klasen, S., & Vollmer, S. 2013. An African growth miracle? Or: What do asset indices tell us about trends in economic performance? *Review of Income and Wealth*, 59(S1): S37–S61.
- Haushofer, J., & Fehr, E. 2014. On the psychology of poverty. *Science*, 344(6186): 862–867.
- Heit, E., & Rotello, C.M. 2010. Relations between inductive reasoning and deductive reasoning. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 36(3): 805–812.
- Hermansson, N., & Olofsson, O. 2008. The corporate social responsibility implementation process: the four-step model to an efficient CSR implementation. Bachelor's dissertation. Kristianstad University.
- Herselman, S. 2012. Mind of a banker/heart of a social worker. *Africanus*, 42(1): 69–84.
- Hick, R. 2012. The capability approach: Insights for a new poverty focus. *Journal of Social Policy*, 41(2): 291–308.
- Hick, R. 2014. Poverty as capability deprivation: Conceptualizing and measuring poverty in contemporary Europe. *European Journal of Sociology*, 55(3): 295–323.
- Hoge, G.L., Stylianou, A.M., Postmus, J.L., & Johnson, L. 2020. Domestic violence/intimate partner violence and issues of financial abuse and control: what does financial empowerment look like? In Callahan, C., Frey, J.J., & Imboden, R. (eds.).

The Routledge handbook on financial social work: Direct practice with vulnerable populations. New York: Routledge.

Holscher, D. 2008. The emperor's new clothes: South Africa's attempted transition to developmental social welfare and social work. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 17(2): 114–123.

Houghton, C., Casey, D., Shaw, D., & Murphy, K. 2013. Rigour in qualitative case–study research. *Nurse Res*, 20(4): 12–17.

Huang, J., Sherraden, M.S., Despard, M.R., Rothwell, D., Friedline, T., Doran, J., & McKinney, R. 2017. Build financial capability for all. In Fong, R., Lubben, J., & Barth, R.P. (eds.). *Grand challenges for social work and society*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Human Science Research Council. 2013. *Are social grants a threat to fiscal sustainability?* Available: <http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/review/hsrc-review-november-2013/social-grants-fiscas> [Accessed 23 August 2019].

Huston, S.J. 2010. Measuring financial literacy. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 44(2): 296–316.

INSOL International, 2001, *Consumer debt report: Report of findings and recommendations*. London: International Federation of Insolvency Professionals.

International Federation of Social Workers. 2014. *Global definition of social work*. Available: <https://www.ifsw.org/what-is-social-work/global-definition-of-social-work/> [Accessed 9 July 2020].

Jacob, K., Hudson, S., & Bush, M. 2000. *Tools for survival: An analysis of financial literacy programs for lower-income families*. Chicago: Woodstock Institute.

Jacobson, T.L. 2016. Amartya Sen's capabilities approach and communication for development and social change. *Journal of communication*, 66(5): 789–810.

Johnsen, S. 2017. Social enterprise in the United Arab Emirates. *Social Enterprise Journal*, 13(4): 392–409.

Jumpstart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy. 2007. *National standards in K–12 personal finance education*. Available: https://www.jumpstart.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2017_NationalStandardsBook.pdf [Accessed 2 April 2019].

- Kagotho, N., Ssewamala, F.M., Paatak-Pietrafesa, M., & Byansi, W. 2018. Testing the financial capability framework: Findings from YouthSave-impact study Kenya. *Social work*, 63(1): 67–74.
- Kalpana, K. 2016. *Women, microfinance, and the state in neoliberal India*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Karger, H. 2015. Curbing the financial exploitation of the poor: Financial literacy and social work education. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 51(3): 425–438.
- Kasser, T., Rosenblum, K.L., Sameroff, A.J., Deci, E.L., Niemiec, C.P. Ryan, R.M., Arnadottir, O., Bond, R., Dittmar, H., & Dungan, N. 2014. Changes in materialism, changes in psychological well-being: Evidence from three longitudinal studies and an intervention experiment. *Motivation and Emotion*, 38(1): 1–22.
- Kato, S., Ashley, S.R., & Weaver, R.L. 2017. Insights for measuring social value: classification of measures related to the capabilities approach. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Non-profit Organisations*, 29: 558–573.
- Kim, S., & Sherraden, M.S. 2014. The capability approach and social justice. In M. Reisch (ed.). *The Routledge international handbook of social justice*. United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Kimmit, J., & Muñoz, P. 2018. Sensemaking the ‘social’ in social entrepreneurship. *International Small Business Journal: Researching Entrepreneurship*, 36(8): 859–886.
- Kindle, P.A. 2013. The financial literacy of social work students. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 49(3): 397–407.
- Klapper, L., Lusardi, A., & van Oudheusden, P. 2014. *Financial literacy around the world: Insights from the standard & poor’s rating services global financial literacy survey*. Available: https://gflec.org/wpcontent/uploads/2015/11/Finlit_paper_16_F2_singles.pdf [Accessed 6 March 2020].
- Konkel, R. 2014. The monetization of global poverty: the concept of poverty in World Bank history, 1944-90. *Journal of global history*, 9(2): 276–300.
- Lee, W. 2016. Social work-business sector collaboration in pursuit of economic justice. *Social Work*, 61(3): 209–216.

- Leech, N.L., & Onwuegbuzie, A.J. 2007. An array of qualitative data analysis tools: A call for data analysis triangulation. *School psychology quarterly*, 22(4): 557–584.
- Leßmann, O. 2012. Applying the capability approach empirically: An overview with special attention to labour. *Management Review*, 23(2): 98–118.
- Liu, Y., Guo, Y., & Zhou, Y. 2018. Poverty alleviation in rural China: Policy changes, future challenges and policy implications. *China Agricultural Economic Review*, 10(2): 241–259.
- Loke, V., Watts, J.L., & Kakoti, S.A. 2013. Financial capabilities of service providers in the asset building field. In Birkenmaier, J.M., Sherraden, M.S., & Curley, J. (eds.). *Financial capability and asset development: Research, education, policy and practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lombard, A. 2008. The Implementation of the White Paper for Social Welfare: A ten-year review. *The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher*, 20(2): 155–173.
- Lund, C., Breen, A., Flisher, A.J., Kakuma, R., Corrigall, J., Joska, J.A., Swartz, L., & Patel, V., 2010. Poverty and common mental disorders in low- and middle-income countries: A systematic review. *Soc. Sci. Med*, 71(3): 517–528.
- Lusardi, A., & Mitchell, O.S. 2006. Financial literacy and retirement preparedness: Evidence and implications for financial education programs. *Working Paper No. 2006-144*. Michigan: University of Michigan.
- Maesele, T. 2012. *From charity to welfare rights? A study of social care practices*. Ghent: Department of Social Welfare Studies, Ghent University.
- Mago, S., & Hofisi, C. 2012. Rural microfinance: a strategy for reducing aid dependence for poverty alleviation in rural sub-Saharan Africa. *Africanus*, 42(1): 85–97.
- Mangoma, A., & Wilson-Prangley, A. 2019. Black Tax: Understanding the financial transfers of the emerging black middle class. *Development Southern Africa*, 36(4): 443–460.
- Markham, A. 2009. How can qualitative researchers produce work that is meaningful across time, space, and culture? In Markham, A., & Bayn, N. (eds.). *Internet inquiry: Conversations about method*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

- Maslow, A. 1954. *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper.
- Mateus, A.D., Allen-Ile, C., & Iwu, C.G. 2014. Skills shortage in South Africa: Interrogating the repertoire of discussions. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Science*, 5(6): 63–73.
- Mboweni, 2020. *Minister Tito Mboweni: 2020 Supplementary Budget Speech*. Available: <https://www.gov.za/speeches/minister-tito-mboweni-2020-supplementary-budget-speech-24-jun-2020-0000> [Accessed: 7 July 2020].
- McGrath, S., & Akoojee, S. 2007. Education and skills for development in South Africa: Reflections on the accelerated and shared growth initiative for South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 27(4): 421–434.
- Menard, M. 2017. *So many courses, so little progress: why financial education doesn't work – and what does*. Available: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3098279> [Accessed 7 July 2020].
- Merriam, S.B. 1998. *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Midgley, J. 1995. *Social development: the developmental perspective in social welfare*. London: Sage.
- Midgley, J., & Conley, A. 2010. *Social work and social development: Theories and skills for developmental social work*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Milena, Z. R., Dainora, G., & Alin, S. 2008. *Qualitative research methods: a comparison between focus groups and in-depth interviews*. Available: <http://steconomiceuoradea.ro/anale/volume/2008/v4-management-marketing/235.pdf> [Accessed 21 March 2019].
- Mkandawire, T. 2004. *Social policy in a developmental context*. Switzerland: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.
- Morehouse, R. 2012. *Beginning interpretative enquiry: A step by step approach to research and evaluation*. London: Routledge.
- Morrow-Howell, N., & Sherraden, M.S. 2015. *Financial capability and asset holding in later life: A life course perspective*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Mundy, K. 2006. Education for all and the new development compact. In Zajda, J, Majhanovich, S., & Rust, V. (eds.). *Education and Social Justice*. The Netherlands: Springer.
- Nash, J., Jenkinson, A., Vayro, A. & Sandlat, R. 2005. *Understanding personal debt and financial difficulty in Australia*. Melbourne: ANZ & ACNielson.
- Nega, B., & Schneider, G. 2014. Social entrepreneurship, microfinance and, economic development in Africa. *Journal of Economic Issues*, 48(2): 367–376.
- Nkanjeni, U. 2019. *Four of the scandals that tainted former minister Bathabile Dlamini*. Available: <https://www.timeslive.co.za/politics/2019-06-12-four-of-the-scandals-that-tainted-former-minister-bathabile-dlamini/> [Accessed 24 June 2019].
- Nuvvula, S. 2016. Learned helplessness. *Contemporary Clinical Dentistry*, 7(4): 426–427.
- Oliphant, S.M., & Bennet, C.S. 2020. Using reflexivity journaling to lessen the emic-etic divide in a qualitative study of Ethiopian immigrant women. *Qualitative Social Work*, 19(4): 599–611.
- Oliphant, S.M., & Bennett, C.S. 2019. Using reflexivity journaling to lessen the emic-etic divide in a qualitative study of Ethiopian immigrant women. *Qualitative Social Work*, 19(4): 599–611.
- Oliver, D.G., Serovich, J.M., & Manson, T.L. 2005. Constraints and opportunities with interview transcription: Towards reflection in qualitative research. *NIH Public Access*, 84(2): 1273–1289.
- Ornellas, A. & Engelbrecht, L.K. 2020. Neoliberal impact on social work in South African Non-Governmental Organisations. *Southern African Journal for Social Work and Social Development*, 32(1): 1–21.
- Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, 2010. *Multidimensional poverty*. Available: https://www.ophi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/MD-poverty-presentation_eng2.pdf?0a8fd7 [Accessed 5 March 2019].
- Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative. 2020. *Charting pathways out of multi-dimensional poverty: Achieving the SDGs*. Available: http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2020_mpi_report_en.pdf [Accessed 20 June 2020].

Parker, J. 2010. *Financial literacy and education as an asset development strategy: The potential of IDA saving clubs at community action agencies at the faculty of the Heller school for social policy and management*. Waltham: Brandeis University.

Patel, L. 2005. *Social welfare and social development in South Africa*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Patel, L., & Mushonga, H. 2014. Corporate social responsibility and development: A study of stakeholder perspectives of listed South African companies. *Africanus*, 44(2): 50–63.

Planting, S. 2013. *The black middle-class burden*. Available: <https://www.moneyweb.co.za/archive/the-black-middle-class-burden> [Accessed 7 July 2020].

Polgreen, L. & Bajaj, V. 2010. *India microcredit faces collapse from default*. Available: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/18/world/asia/18micro.html> [Accessed 16 May 2019].

Polit, D.F., & Beck, C.T. 2012. *Nursing research: Principles and methods*. Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Probst, B. 2015. The eye regards itself: Benefits and challenges of reflexivity in qualitative social work research. *Social Work Research*, 39(1): 37–48.

Probst, B., & Berenson, L. 2014. The double arrow: How qualitative social work researchers use reflexivity. *Qualitative Social Work*, 13(6): 813–827.

Quartz Africa, 2016. *Instead of teaching students to be better at math, South Africa has dropped its passing mark*. Available: <https://qz.com/africa/859222/south-africas-education-department-reduced-the-pass-mark-for-mathematics-to-20-in-schools/> [Accessed 10 December 2019].

Rasool, F., Botha, C.J., & Bisschoff, C.A. 2012. Push and pull factors in relation to skills shortages in South Africa. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 30(1): 11–20.

Ratlebjane, M. 2015. *How Black Tax cripples our youth's aspirations*. Available: <https://mg.co.za/article/2015-10-29-how-black-tax-cripples-our-youths-aspirations> [Accessed 7 July 2020].

- Ravitch, S.M., & Carl, N.M. 2016. *Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Ressel, A. 2018. *SA's social entrepreneurs - going from surviving to thriving*. Available: <https://www.fin24.com/Opinion/sas-social-entrepreneurs-going-from-surviving-to-thriving-20180615> [Accessed 21 December 2019].
- Robeyns, I. 2005. The capability approach: A theoretical survey. *Journal of Human Development*, 6(1): 93–117.
- RSA (Republic of South Africa). 1995. *The Bill of Rights*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- RSA (Republic of South Africa). 1997.. Ministry of Welfare and Population. *White Paper for Social Welfare*. Notice 1108 of 1997, Government Gazette, vol. 386, No. 18166 of 8 August. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- RSA (Republic of South Africa). 2009. Department of Labour. *Master List of Scarce and Critical Skills*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- RSA (Republic of South Africa). 2012. Ministry of Welfare and Population. *The National Development Plan*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- RSA (Republic of South Africa). 2013. Ministry of Welfare and Population. *The Integrated Service Delivery Model*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- RSA (Republic of South Africa). 2016. Ministry of Welfare and Population. *Comprehensive report on the review of the White Paper for social welfare*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- RSA (Republic of South Africa). 2019. Ministry of Welfare and Population. *Statistics on grants*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Ruokonen-Engler, M.K., & Siouti, I. 2016. Biographical entanglements, self-reflexivity, and transnational knowledge production. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 22(9): 745–752.
- Saleeby, D. 1992. *The strengths perspective in social work practice*. New York: Longman.
- Sanders, C.K., Weaver, T.L., & Schnabel, M. 2007. Economic education for battered women: An evaluation of outcomes. *Affilia*, 22(3): 240–254.

- Scheirer, M.A. 2013. Linking sustainability research to intervention types. *American Journal of Public Health*, 103(4): e73–e80.
- Schuchardt, J., Hanna, S.D., Hira, T.K., Lyons, A.C., Palmer, L., & Xiao, J.J. 2009. Financial literacy and education research priorities. *Journal of Financial Counselling and Planning*, 20(1): 84–95.
- Schurink, W., Fouché, C.B. & De Vos, A.S. 2011. Qualitative data analysis and interpretation. In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delport, C.S.L. (eds.). *Research at grass roots: for the social sciences and human service professions*. Pretoria: van Schaik Publishers.
- Scott, G.M., & Garner, R. 2013. *Doing qualitative research: Designs, methods, and techniques*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education.
- Sen, A. 1992. *Inequality re-examined*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.
- Sen, A.K. 1979. Equality of what? In McMurrin, S.M. (ed.). *The Tanner lecture on human values*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press.
- Sherraden, M. 2018. Asset building as social investment. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, XLV (4): 35–54.
- Sherraden, M., Lough, B.J., Sherraden, M.S., Williams-Shanks, T.R., & Huang, J. 2019. Applied social research: Aiming for impact. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*, 10(4): 545–570.
- Sherraden, M.S. 2010. Financial capability: What is it and how can it be created? *CSD Working Paper No. 2010-17*. St. Louis: Washington University.
- Sherraden, M.S. 2017. *Encyclopaedia of social work*. Available: <http://oxfordre.com.ez.sun.ac.za/socialwork/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199975839.001.0001/acrefore-9780199975839-e-1201?rskey=qxcllC&result=1> [Accessed 9 February 2019].
- Sherraden, M.S., & Huang, J. 2019. Financial social work. In Franklin, C., Allen-Mears, P., Bent-Goodley, T.B., Detlaff, A.J., Gehlert, S., Healy, L.M., & Reamer, F. (eds.). *Encyclopaedia of social work*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Sherraden, M.S., Birkenmaier, J.M., & Collins, J.M. 2018. *Financial capability and asset building in vulnerable households: Theory and practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Sherraden, M.S., Birkenmaier, J.M., Sherraden, M., & Curley, J. 2013. *Financial capability and asset development: Research, education, policy, and practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Soifer, S.D., McNeely, J.B., Costa, C.L., & Pickering-Bernheim, N. 2014. *Community economic development in social work*. New York: Columbia University Press.

South Africa Council for Social Service Professions. 2020. *The Code of Ethics*. Available:

<https://socialdev.mandela.ac.za/socialdev/media/Store/documents/SACSSP-Code-of-Ethics.pdf> [Accessed 9 July 2020].

Spaull, N. 2015. Schooling in South Africa: How low-quality education becomes a poverty trap. In De Lannoy, A., Swartz, S., Lake, L., & Smith, C. (eds.). *South African Child Gauge*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Statistics South Africa, 2014. *Employment, unemployment, skills and economic growth*. Available:

https://www.statssa.gov.za/presentation/Stats%20SA%20presentation%20on%20skills%20and%20unemployment_16%20September.pdf [Accessed 20 May 2019].

Statistics South Africa, 2016. *Community survey*. Available: <http://cs2016.statssa.gov.za/> [Accessed 19 March 2019].

Statistics South Africa, 2018. *Unemployment drops in fourth quarter of 2018*.

Available: <http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=11897> [Accessed 19 March 2019].

Statistics South Africa, 2019a. *More than half of youth have no money to pay for their tuition*. Available: <http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=12040> [Accessed 5 May 2019].

Statistics South Africa, 2019b. *SA population reaches 58.8 million*. Available: <http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=12362> [Accessed 3 August 2019].

Statistics South Africa. 2015. *Living conditions survey*. Available: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0310/P03102014.pdf> [Accessed 19 March 2019].

- Steinert, J.L., Cluver, L.D., Melendez-Torres, G.J., & Vollmer, S. 2018. One size fits all? The validity of a composite poverty index across urban and rural households in South Africa. *Soc Indic Res*, 136(1): 51–72.
- Stuart, P.H. 2016. Financial capability in early social work practice: βssons for today. *Social Work*, 61(4): 297–303.
- Tent, D.A. 2015. Social entrepreneurship. *Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai – Studio Europaea*, LX(4): 97–108.
- Terzi, L. 2010. The capabilities approach. In Peterson, P., Baker, E., & McGaw, B. (eds.). *International encyclopaedia of education*. New York: Elsevier.
- Theodora, B.D., & Marti'ah, S. 2016. The effect of family economic education towards lifestyle mediated by financial literacy. *Dinamika Pendidikan*, 11(1): 18–25.
- Thompson, S.K. 2002. *Sampling*. New York: Wiley.
- United Nations Development Program. 2010. The real wealth of nations: Pathways to human development. *Human Development Report 2010*. New York: United Nations Development Program.
- Van Aardt, C.J. 2004. *A projection of the South African population, 2001 – 2021*. Pretoria: Bureau of Market Research, University of South Africa.
- Visser, K. 2011. Social entrepreneurship in South Africa: Context, relevance and extent. *Industry and Higher Education*, 25(4): 233–247.
- Way, W.L. 2014. Contextual influences of financial behaviour: A proposed model for adult financial literacy education. *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education*, 2014(141): 25–35.
- Weaver, T.L., Sanders, C.K., Campbell, C.L., & Schnabel, M. 2009. Development and preliminary psychometric of the Domestic Violence-Related Financial Issues Scale (DV-FI). *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 24(4): 569–585.
- Wessel, R. 2013. “Our objective is realistic”, says one expert on financial literacy, but can initiatives really change behaviours? *CFA Institute Magazine*, 24(3): 31–35.
- West, M. 2003. Dying to get out of debt: Consumer insolvency law and suicide in Japan. *Law and Economic Working Papers Archive: 2003-2009*. Michigan: University of Michigan Law School.

Widyaningrum, N., Bhat, M., & Lee, W. 2019. Microfinance in India, Indonesia, and the United States: Implications for social work. *International Social Work*, 62(2): 754–767.

Winter, J., Luhrman, M., & Serra Garcia, M. 2013. *The effects of financial literacy training: Evidence from a field experiment in German high schools*. Available: https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/79744/1/VfS_2013_pid_372.pdf [Accessed 5 June 2019].

World Health Organization. 2020. *Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic*. Available: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019> [Accessed 7 July 2020].

Zaleskiewicz, T., Gasiorowska, A., & Kesebir, P. 2013. Saving can save from death anxiety: Mortality salience and financial decision making. *PLoS One*, 8(11): e79407.

Zhu, A.Y.F. 2018. Links between family poverty and the financial behaviours of adolescents: Parental roles. *Child Ind Res*, 12(4): 1259–1273.

Annexure 1: Interview schedule

PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIAL WORKERS ON THE ROLE OF FINANCIAL LITERACY EDUCATION IN FACILITATING SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

THEMES FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH SOCIAL WORKERS

The goal of this interview is to develop an understanding of the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in social development. Please answer my questions as comprehensive as possible and reflect your honest perceptions. Some questions may overlap depending on your perceptions.

1. Biographical information of participants

- 1.1. How long have you been practicing social work?
- 1.2. Describe the type of organisation you are working for (e.g. public or private).
- 1.3. In what geographical area are you working (urban, semi-urban or rural).
- 1.4. Describe the main features of your work.
- 1.5. How many cases (in terms of families) do you have in your caseload?

2. Profile of service users' financial literacy

- 2.1. Describe the main problems of the service users in your caseload.
- 2.2. Provide an estimated percentage of your caseload who you define as poor.

2.2.1. Why are you defining these service users as poor (what indicators are you using for defining a service user as poor)?

2.2.2. What are the reasons for these service users' poverty (describe in detail)?

2.3. Provide an estimated percentage of your caseload who you think are over-indebted (caught in a debt trap).

2.3.1. Why do you think these service users are over-indebted? (give a specific practice example to substantiate your perception)

2.4. What estimated percentage of the service users in your caseload do you think constitutes as being financially illiterate? (e.g. "do not know how to work with their money")

2.4.1. Why do you think these service users are financially illiterate?

2.4.2. Do you think that these service users should be educated to be more financially literate (to work better with their money)? Motivate your answer in detail.

2.4.2.1. What aspects should these service users be educated in (in terms of financial literacy)? Be as specific as possible.

3. The role of social work in facilitating financial literacy education

3.1. Are you doing anything in your service rendering to educate your service users to be more financially literate? Motivate in detail why or why not and give an example.

3.2. Who do you think (specifically) should be involved in financial literacy education of your service users (describe in detail)?

3.3. How should these financial literacy education endeavours be operationalized? (your perception).

3.4. What do you think should be your specific role in the financial literacy education of your service users? (Describe in detail)

3.4.1. What may (a) hinder (*the challenges*) and (b) help you (*to facilitate*) to get involved in financial literacy education of your service users? (describe in detail).

3.5. Do you think that financial literacy education of service users may contribute to poverty alleviation and social development? (motivate your answer).

3.6. What recommendations (if any) do you have for social education institutes, frontline social workers and social work organisations regarding financial literacy education of vulnerable people?

Annexure 2: Informed Consent Form

Stellenbosch University Consent to Participate in Research

Perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in facilitating social development: a capabilities approach.

You are asked to participate in a research study by A. Jordaan, a master's student from the Social Work Department at the University of Stellenbosch. The results of the study will become part of a larger research report. You were selected as a potential participant because you are a social worker who practices a generalist form of social work and works directly towards poverty eradication.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to develop an understanding of the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in social development.

2. PROCEDURES

If you would participate in the study, we would ask you to do the following:

A semi-structured interview will be utilised to gather information confidentially. You need not indicate your name or any particulars on the interview schedule.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Any uncertainties on any of the aspects of the schedule you may experience during the interview can be discussed and clarified at any time.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO RESPONDENTS/SOCIETY

The results of the study will allow insight into the perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in social development. This information can be useful for social service organisations and social work practitioners to improve service delivery and better address potential economic needs of service users.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

No payment in any form will be received for participating in the study.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be traced back to you will remain confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of qualitative coding where each response will be recorded, transcribed and kept in a password-protected folder on a computer.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can decide whether to be a part of the study or not. If you volunteer for the study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

8 IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENT-RESEARCHER

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Prof. L. K. Engelbrecht (supervisor), Department of Social Work, University of Stellenbosch, Tel. 021-808-2070, Email: lke@sun.ac.za

9 RIGHTS OF RESEARCH RESPONDENTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Malene Fouche [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021-808-4622] at the Division for Research Development.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to me the participant by

_____ in English and the participant is in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to him / her. The participant was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to his / her satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study.

Name of participant _____

Signature of participant _____

Date _____

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to

_____ [name of subject/participant]. [He / She] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English and no translator was used.

Signature of investigator _____

Date _____

Annexure 3: Ethical clearance letter

NOTICE OF APPROVAL

REC: SBER - Amendment Form

4 May 2020

Project number: 13086

Project Title: Perceptions of social workers on the role of financial literacy education in facilitating social development

Dear Mr Adriaan Jordaan

Co-investigators:

Your REC: SBER - Amendment Form submitted on 25 April 2020 was reviewed and approved by the REC: Social, Behavioural and

Education Research (REC: SBE).

Please note below expiration date of this approved submission:

Ethics approval period:

Protocol approval date (Humanities) Protocol expiration date (Humanities)

21 January 2020 20 January 2023

GENERAL COMMENTS:

1) There is currently a **postponement of all research activities at Stellenbosch University**, apart from research that can be conducted remotely/online and requires no human contact, and research in those areas specifically acknowledged as essential services by the South African government under the presidential regulations related to COVID-19 (e.g. clinical studies).

2) Remote (desktop-based/online) research activities, online analyses of existing data, and the writing up of research results are strongly encouraged in all SU research environments.

Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: SBE, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.

Please use your SU project number (13086) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further

modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

FOR CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC APPROVAL PERIOD

You are required to submit a progress report to the REC: SBE before the approval period has expired if a continuation of ethics approval is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

Once you have completed your research, you are required to submit a final report to the REC: SBE for review.

Included Documents:

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at cgraham@sun.ac.za.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

Annexure 4: Reflexivity Report

Reflexivity can be defined as intentional self-awareness of the reciprocal influence of the researcher-participant relationship during the research process (Gilgun, 2006). Reflexivity helps ensure that aspects such as the researcher's background, experiences, emotions, values are not ignored or neutralised (Oliphant & Bennett, 2020). Therefore, the aforementioned factors can be regarded as important variables when considering the aspect of co-creation of knowledge between the researcher and the participants. Furthermore, Probst (2015) provides insight into reflexivity as a concept by describing it as [becoming] aware of [one's] own biases, assumptions, and agendas. Ruokonen-Engler and Souti (2016) deem biographical reflexivity a useful approach in narrative research as it can help reflect the meaning of one's own entanglements. A list of six questions, that is aimed at assisting the researcher in exploring their reflexivity, will be answered below, as delineated by Ruokonen-Engler and Suoti (2016).

1. What personal experiences do I have with my research topic?

At the time of the start of my study, I had just finished my undergraduate social work degree. Though I had a passion for poverty-centred social work, I always felt that there had to be a different, more effective way of working towards large-scale poverty alleviation goals. Due to me still being relatively new to social work as a discipline, I have not had much personal experience with my research topic yet, but it is a field that interests me greatly. As such, I am aiming to continue pursuing my studies in this field to further investigate ways in which I can try and contribute to poverty alleviation efforts in South Africa.

2. How did I come to study this specific topic in the field?

In the final semester of my final year of my undergraduate studies, we were presented a course that pertained to contemporary issues. The most significant part of the course (for me) pertained to the theme of financial literacy education. Ever since that course, I have been inspired to investigate the ways in which facets of social work and economics could be integrated to potentially work towards more efficient and effective poverty-alleviation initiatives. Throughout the process of the completion of this study, my interest in this topic has expanded and I'm looking forward to pursuing further studies centred around this topic.

3. What is my relationship to the topic being investigated?

As I have been living in South Africa my whole life, I have grown accustomed and familiar with the impact that poverty (and its various consequences) have on our country and our general society. Ever since the completion of my study however, my relationship to the topic has become more personal. I think this shift occurred when I realised that the more that I researched on the topic, the more the need for large-scale poverty alleviation became apparent. As such, I have systematically become more motivated to continue pursuing research in this field as I feel that economic themes in social work can be very valuable for us as a country. Therefore, since economic themes are currently understudied and underutilised in South Africa, I want to continue researching it to raise awareness about its potential value that it can have for our country as poverty alleviation initiatives.

4. How did I gain access to the field?

I gained access to the field by utilising my own professional network. The main role-players in this network pertained to my supervisor for the study, as well as other social workers that I had encountered during my undergraduate years. My supervisor was one of the few scholars who have investigated the similar themes in South Africa and as such, he could assist me when I had questions pertaining to the field. The other social workers who formed part of my study were accessed by identifying, contacting and engaging individuals who were willing and able to assist me in my study.

5. How does my own position (age, gender, class, economic position etc.) influence interaction in the field and the data collection process?

Since I undertook this study right after I finished my undergraduate degree, I was uncertain what to expect to a large degree. I was nervous at the amount of work that lay ahead and felt unsure what the best way was to approach the research in the beginning stages of the process. As I progressed through the process, I became more confident in my abilities. As I became more confident, I systematically became more aware of how my own biases (in terms of the variables presented in this question) could potentially impact upon the research. I therefore decided to start reflexive journaling to ensure that I am attuned to my own biases. I feel that the practice of reflective journaling not only assisted me in staying aware of my biases but also help to gain a better understanding of how my own experiences engaged with the

experiences of the participants in the interviews, as well as the literature that I engaged with throughout the process.

6. What is my interpretation perspective?

Since the study was qualitative in nature, it became apparent that my interpretation perspective was subjective. This is appropriate however, as the goal of the study was to attain insight into perceptions, and perceptions are subjective. Since I was embedded in the research process (and thus not objectively removed, as would be the case in, for example, in quantitative study), it was imperative to utilise various techniques such as reflexive journaling and member checking to ensure that my subjectivity did not taint or influence the results of the data in any way.